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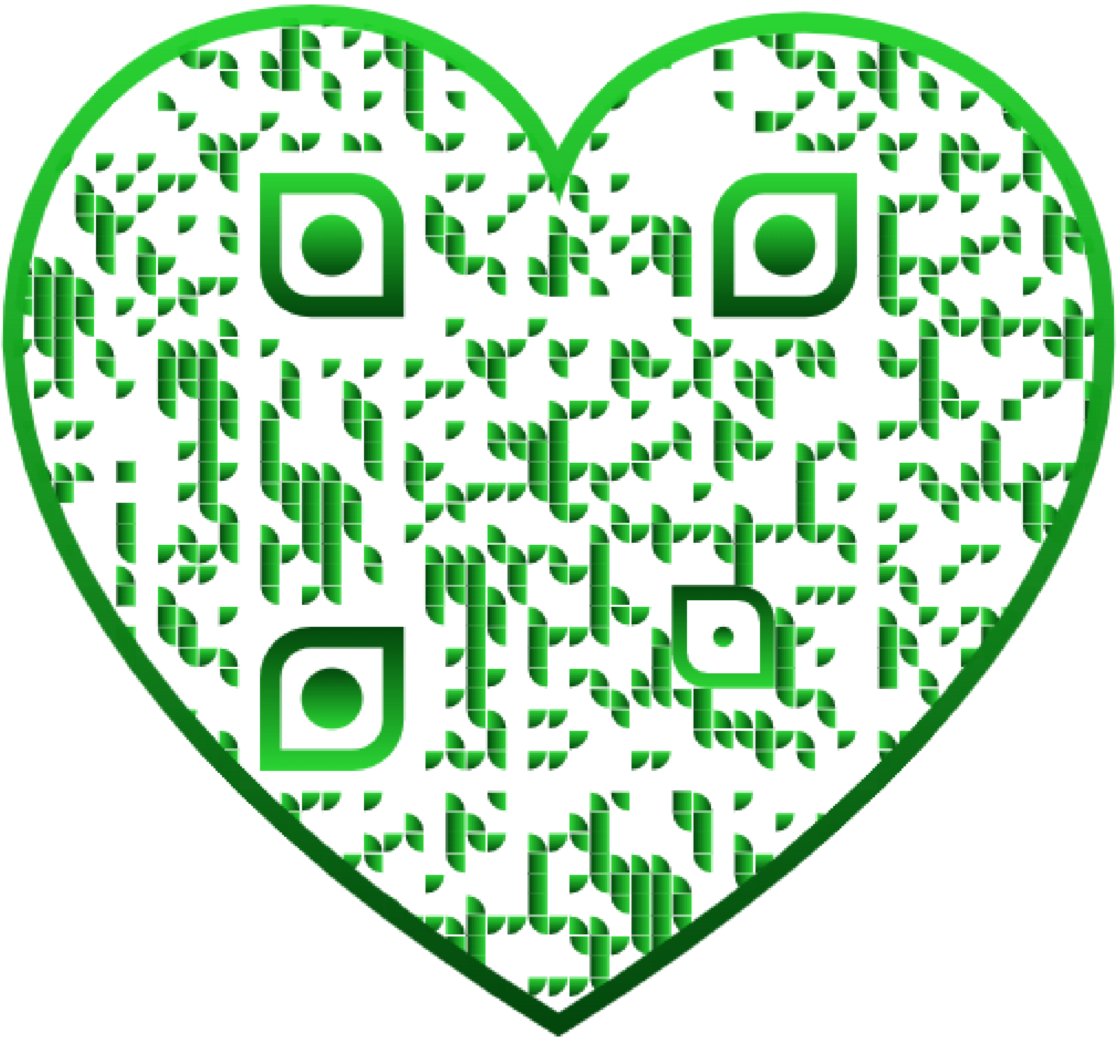

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All things to all men

Welcome to our celebration of the car many consider to be Jaguar's greatest icon – the Mk2, and its family. Few large British saloons have ever managed to be so much to so many – a family car, the solicitor's car, the police car, the getaway car, it's been there and done it all. Maybe that's why we love it so.

Even Jaguar itself recognised that the small saloons were a good thing – that's why it not only updated the Mk1 into the Mk2 for 1959, but built on the concept to pull Jaguar's range upwards with the Daimler V8, the S-type, the 420 and the Daimler Sovereign. The small saloon concept worked so well that it became the mainstay of the company through what many fans argue was its best decade; the 1960s. Not only that, but it led to spiritual successors that brought the brand into the reach of new enthusiasts for the 21st century.

And that's what we're celebrating in this title – small saloons, from 1955 to the present day via the Mk1, Mk2, S-type, 420, X-TYPE and XE. We've got test drives, twin tests, restoration stories, and buying guides galore.

Join us for 132 pages of Jaguar indulgence. We loved every minute of putting this together, and we hope the same spirit is reflected in your enjoyment of the finished product.

Sam Skelton
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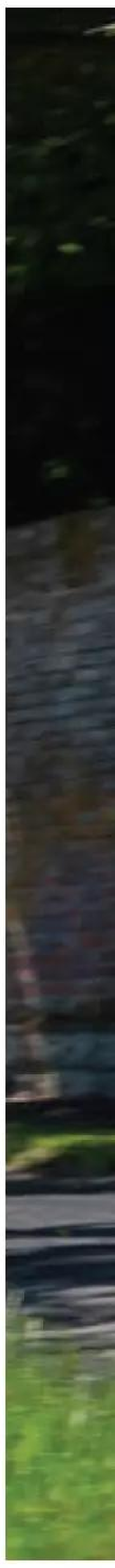

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CAT WITH CLAWS

We look back at the story of Jaguar's most iconic sports saloon

WORDS: **SAM SKELTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **KELSEY ARCHIVES**

What is it we love about the Jaguar Mk2? At 65 years old we love it more than ever. To several generations it has a history, it's been Dad's car, a police car, a getaway car, a television star, a hot rod donor car, a banger racer and a show car. It reminds us of the old days, before political correctness because a buzzword and when all manner of societal ills could be excused as a little mischief. Unashamedly raffish and new money, and yet with a thin veneer of respectability, the spiv's favourite occupies a rare automotive position in the nation's collective rose-tinted retrospective alongside the Land Rover, the Mini and the London cab. People have memories of the Mk2 and its family from all walks of life, and six and a half decades on it's only right that we celebrate the machine that has touched so many people in so many different ways.

The Mk2 story cannot be told without reference to its predecessor, the 2.4-litre of 1955 colloquially named the Mk1 in retrospect. It occupied a new position for Jaguar based in part upon its »

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range's unique dichotomy – it offered big saloons for bookies and spivs, and sports card for the well-heeled cad. But when the XK buyers needed something with more space, perhaps after starting a family or a respectable job, there was nothing really suitable that retained the sporting image. Jaguar therefore created a smaller saloon, inspired by the styling of the sports cars and with rather more glamour than its larger models. Jaguar's first monocoque arguably created the template for the premium sports saloon, and it became an instant hit. The range expanded in 1957 with the launch of the 3.4-litre, offering increased performance for those not satisfied by the 2.4's pace.

Its grace and space, however, were unquestioned. That didn't stop Jagaur tweaking the car after only four years, to produce the Mk2. The glasshouse was opened up for a greater degree of airiness in the cabin, there was more chrome, new light fittings, and the wheelarch spats were reduced in size. There was a subtly changed grille and a completely new interior. From almost every angle, you could find something to like about the styling of the junior Jaguar, and the newly-offered 3.8-litre engine from the XK150 meant that very little else on the road was able to keep pace. 220bhp meant 0-60 in just 8.5 seconds and a top speed comfortably in excess of 120mph – acceleration features that had certain modern Jaguars beaten almost up to the Millennium.

The initial public reaction to the Mk2 Jaguar range was one of delight at the car, and surprise at the price" recalled former Jaguar advertising manager John Rogers when interviewed by the BBC in 1996. With prices in 1959 starting at £1534 and rising to £1779 for the 3.8, the car's closest rivals would have been models such as the Rover 80 and the Princess Three Litre.

And in those early years, demand was good – but Sir William Lyons wasn't about to rest on his laurels. Development was underway on a new Mk3 model to replace the Mk2, but the extra weight of the independent rear suspension meant that the 2.4 could no longer be offered. With the Mk2 selling well, it was decided to reposition the new car as an interim model between the Mk2 and the giant MkX – and the Jaguar S-type was born. Faster than the Mk2 in the bends »

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“The Mk2 was perfect for us. It was the perfect crim’s car”

owing to its E-type derived independent rear suspension system, its slower acceleration didn’t detract from what was seen as an impressive sports saloon – and it even seemed roomier inside, owing to redesigned seats.

The year before, Jaguar had launched another development of the Mk2 theme, the Daimler 2.5 V8. Spurred on by major Daimler retailer Stratstone offering to abandon other franchises if a smaller Daimler model could be offered, Jaguar mated the Mk2 bodyshell with the engine from the sporting SP250 and a new Borg-Warner automatic gearbox. The resulting motor offered more performance than the Jaguar 2.4, and targeted a different type of buyer. While Jaguars were still seen by certain aspects of society as nouveau riche, the Daimler V8 was definitely an establishment choice – not so much competing with its Jaguar stablemate as complementing it, taking the model to a wholly new audience.

But even before the car had left production, it was beginning to develop an image problem. In 1967 film Robbery, the villains careen about in a grey Mk2 while chased by black S-type area cars. And it wasn’t just artistic licence, Great Train Robber Bruce Reynolds had planned to use a fleet of Mk2s as part of the getaway. Speaking to the BBC in 1996 he recalled “The Mk2 was perfect for us. It was the perfect crim’s car. We did have an alternative plan when we committed the Great Train Robbery – we were going to use ten Mk2 Jaguars. This was ruled out mainly because we »

thought it would be highly suspicious having ten Jaguars parked up in a little back lane!" Reynolds recalled a particular problem for the criminal classes using Jaguars – and it was one you might not expect. "You could also have your own stolen car stolen in turn again from you! That did happen to me." There was also the fact that groups of more than two men in a Mk2 would be stopped almost as a matter of course by the police, as its popularity among thieves made it an easy target.

And what was good enough for the villains was good enough for the police, with several forced adopting Mk2 and S-type models as area and traffic cars. The criminals knew how good the Jaguar was – and that if a 3.8 litre Mk2 were to manage to get behind them, regardless of the car they were in it would be best to surrender.

But the Mk2 was never intended to last forever, and Sir William Lyons was readying a replacement for 1963. The new car would be fitted with the independent rear end from the new E-type sports car, and a slightly larger boot. But Mk2 sales were still strong, and Lyons – never a man to miss an opportunity – instead chose to keep the Mk2 in production and pitch the new car between that and the MkX. The Mk3 duly became the S-type, and the older car continued alongside it as an entry level model.

Despite the expanded range and the ability to keep Jaguar prices down, many potential buyers felt that the Mk2 was above their budgets. Buyers of the Ford Zodiac and Vauxhall Cresta needed to be shown that a Jaguar really was within their reach. Advertising manager John Rogers remembered that Jaguar took to targeting this market in particular with the 2.4 Mk2. "Despite the success of the Mk2 series, it was apparent to Jaguar that there were still a lot of people who assumed that they couldn't afford, one, and it was because of this that in 1966 we launched a specific advertising campaign to tell people that the 2.4 was available at £1,341."

The following year, Jaguar would revise the Mk2 range in anticipation of the impending XJ6. The Mk2-derived models were by now a confusing mix – 2.4, 3.4 and 3.8-litre Mk2s, 3.4 and 3.8-litre S-types, and the new-for-1966 420 saloon, which married mini-MkX looks and the 4.2 engine with the S-type shell. On top of this, there were the Daimler V8 and the 420-based Sovereign. So for 1967, Jaguar discontinued the Mk2 3.8, and

> “Despite the success of the Mk2 series, it was apparent to Jaguar”

substantially cheapened the 2.4 and 3.4 litre variants. The new models, called the 240 and 340, would lose their leather trim in favour of Ambla, lose their driving lamps in favour of horn grilles, and adopt slimmer S-type style bumpers. But it wasn’t all bad – there was a modest power increase for the 3.4, while a change of inlet manifold and carburation for the 2.4 mean that the 240 could now crack 100mph for the first time. There were a handful of 340s built with the 3.8 litre engine as special orders – it’s believed six 340 3.8s were built – but it was in these forms that the Jaguar Mk2 would see out its days. Alongside them would be the Daimler, now renamed V8-250 and with an Ambla dashboard top, but retaining the leather and foglamps of the older model.

The launch of the XJ6 in 1968 meant a revision of Jaguar’s entire range, with the 340 discontinued alongside the S-type and 420 models to make space for the new 2.8-litre and 4.2-litre models. The 240 would continue in production until 1969. But by then, the model had rather fallen out of favour. Classic car expert and television personality Quentin Willson recalled in 1994 how his father had owned a Mk2, and used to use it to take him to school – where he was king of the hill as the son of a Jaguar driver. Until the local scrap dealer dropped his son off in a brand new XJ6 – at which point, the image of the once raffish Mk2 had become old hat. In the 1970s it enjoyed an image as the typical bank job car in The Sweeney (despite the fact that The Sweeney only used S-types, never Mk2s), and especially in the aftermath of the 1973 energy crisis the bottom fell out of the Mk2 market almost overnight.

In subsequent years the image of the cars has changed dramatically – from Bread’s Boswell banger to the motor in which Morse enjoyed his Mozart, the Jaguar Mk2 enjoyed something of a renaissance during the classic car boom of the 1980s, transforming from shabby old saloon into a classic to cherish. And while restoring a bac one today is still fraught with potential pitfalls, the likely value of the car at the end of the process justified the investment far more than it would have done in the 1990s. ■

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TWO'S COMPANY

For many people, both the cars pictured here play second fiddle to the iconic Mk2. However, we disagree. We think each of these cars makes a fine alternative to the much-loved baby Jag regardless of price. But of the two, which one comes out on top?

WORDS: **SAM SKELTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **PAUL WALTON**

The Jaguar Mk2 is overrated. There, we've said it. But in truth, it's not quite what we mean – the fact remains that it was an excellent car, offering space and pace that was almost unrivalled for the money – and a car that has earned itself a litany of fans in the 64 years since it was launched. The stumbling block is one of money – with owners of the best examples virtually able to name their price, the Mk2 has passed out of affordable classic territory and into the realms of the collector car.

We find this bewildering in context – after all, the Mk2 was effectively the starting block for other models such as the S-type, the Daimler V8, and the 420 – all of which, in period, offered something over and above the basic model. And yet it is the Mk2 that fetches the money, with the cars once seen as more desirable now seen as the also-rans that fetch a fraction of the asking price. And of these, the two that attract the most interest are the Daimler V8 and the Jaguar S-type, each offering a significant portion of what made the Mk2 so great but with features of their own. In the Daimler's case, it is effectively a Mk2 with a revvy little V8 engine. In the case of the S-type, it's effectively a Mk2 with the same independent rear end as you might find on the E-type. How can these cars be so poorly valued in comparison? And crucially, which one makes the best alternative to a Mk2 today?

First to be launched was the Daimler 2.5 V8 of 1962. A spiritual successor

to the Conquest, it was the final fruit of a proposal to make a new smaller V8-egined saloon based upon another manufacturer's model – a plan that had begun prior to the Jaguar takeover with the DN250, a Daimlerised version of the Vauxhall Cresta. Jaguar had bought Daimler for its Radford factory – but had inherited its distribution network. Primary distributor Stratstone approached Jaguar with a plan – it would sacrifice its VW concession and focus solely upon Jaguar and Daimler if Jaguar would in return provide it with a new small Daimler to sell. So Jaguar put the Daimler engine into a spare Mk1 shell along with a new Borg-Warner automatic gearbox it had been asked to evaluate. The new engine and box transformed the car from a sports saloon to a small luxury car, and Jaguar felt it different enough not to compete with the Mk2. Launched on 8 October 1962, the Daimler had crinkled plinths atop the grille and rear plate, lost the Jaguar's picnic tables in a bid to improve rear legroom, and gained flatter seats and a black crackle finish to the dash centre. Priced above the Mk2 3.8, it was marketed to a very different clientele – and the lack of manual transmission at launch ensured it wouldn't be considered too sporting.

The press were appreciative – not least about the engine. Speaking in the 31 May 1963 issue, Autocar journalists noted that "the rather overworked comparison with a high speed turbine (was) more apt for this unit than for many to which it has been applied." Special note was also made of the ride quality – "Over the special test surfaces of washboard and pavé, the Daimler could be rated exceptional" – and the magazine's overall impression was positive. "It would be illogical, when describing it, to turn a blind eye to »

its true background. Nevertheless, the Daimler vee-8 engine is so fundamentally different from the familiar Jaguar units that the car has a true individuality." Later cars would be available with a manual gearbox, though production was limited and most were still specified as automatics. The 1967 facelift into the V8-250 brought the slimmer bumpers of the Jaguar 240, though at least the Daimler never suffered the indignities of Ambla trim and kept its foglamps to the end. It would eventually be replaced by the Daimler Sovereign 2.8 – a larger, slower model with a far higher price tag and one which differed from the equivalent Jaguar only in small details. Production ended in 1969; still the most expensive of the Mk2 based models, but having had more than one price cut to accommodate newer members of the small saloon range.

Cars like the Jaguar S-type of 1963. The S-type began as a proposal for a new "Mk3" saloon as a replacement for the Mk2 – now Jaguar had its independent rear suspension, it wanted to make use of it on the small saloon range as well. But the Mk2 was still selling well, and Jaguar saw no reason to kill off what was fast becoming a cash cow for the company. Besides, it knew that the independent suspension system was heavy, and simply grafting it onto the Mk2 would result in a slower car – backward steps for a marque known for its sporting prowess. So the model mutated from a Mk2 replacement into a new model intended to bridge the gap between the sporting Mk2 and the large, cumbersome but very smooth MkX. Jaguar tweaked the nose, flattened the roofline and elongated the tail in the manner of the larger car, and on 30 September 1963 the car was unveiled as the S-type. Mindful of the extra weight, there would be no 2.4 option, and no Daimler-engined S-type was ever offered by the factory. Inside, the picnic tables were dropped once more to make more space in the back, and the dashboard

design was adapted to take account of the larger MkX model's influence.

Motor concluded of the S-type 3.8 that it was "One of the most comfortably sprung cars in the world and it will maintain its extremely high cruising speeds with the utmost safety and stability over road surfaces which demand a considerable reduction in speed from most cars. It remains, however, a very fast car indeed with a smooth and effortless engine and the ability to return remarkable average speeds without tiring the driver at all.'

Flagging MkX sales led to the later creation of the 420 – an S-type with a MkX nose job and 4.2 litre engine – and a Daimler version of this car would be created once more to appease Stratstone's Daimler clientele. All models would be replaced in 1968 by the new XJ6 in 2.8-litre and 4.2 litre variants. 26,993 S-types would be made – and a further 16,060 420s and Daimler Sovereigns.

Two different takes on the same theme then. But which one do we prefer? And which one should you buy?

Try to convince any non-car enthusiasts in your life that the Daimler V8 is different to a Jaguar Mk2 and you may as well try to tell them that gravity is horizontal. Because with the exception of a few minor details, the shape is the same – the rounded wings, the bulbous roofline, the slender pillars and the squat, curvaceous tail. It's only in the details that they differ; the crinkled grille surround, the fluted number plate plinth, the Ds in the middle of the hubcaps, the winged D mascot where a leaper once sat and the badges on the bootlid are the only items that mark this out as a Daimler. Beyond that it's pure Jaguar Mk2, meaning that fans of the latter car will be far more at home with the shape of the V8 than of the S-type...

...Which – though familiar – is very different. Let's start at the nose, where the grille has a more pronounced surround, the headlamps have smaller bezels and peaked surrounds which »

are echoes in those for the foglamps. The roofline is flatter, the bumpers slimmer, and the tail longer – all giving the S-type a much more cigar-like profile than the stubby Mk2 from which it was sired. The doors are shared, though, and overall the shape does evoke the Mk2, but it's a Mk2 drawn from memory upon which the proportions are ever so slightly off. Some prefer it, but if you're buying one of these two because you want a Mk2, the leaper on the bonnet isn't enough to make the S-type a more convincing alternative.

On a personal level I prefer the S-type's rear end, so on cosmetic appearance alone I'll give this round to the Jaguar.

Inside, the two cars are more different thank you think. And again, it's the Daimler that bears the greater similarity to the Mk2. It shared the same dashboard, albeit with a black crackle finish to the centre panel which houses the auxiliary gauges and a D on the steering wheel. It's still the same angled lump of timber ahead, and while the seats have a different pattern to the pleating and the front seat is technically a split bench, it still feels like a Mk2 from inside. There's no more or less space, the driving position is unchanged – until you turn the key, you could be inside the sporting Jag. But the burble of that small V8 soon disillusions you.

The sound of the S-type is no different to that of the Mk2, both cars sharing the XK six cylinder engine in 3.4 and 3.8 litre flavours. But that's where the similarities end from inside. Because the S-type dashboard, despite looking similar when viewed in isolation, is totally different. It's flatter, with a more prominent top rail and a shelf beneath. It's much more akin to that seen in the larger MkX, and is deep burr walnut for its entire width. The seats in here are trimmed more as a pair of individual seats than those in the V8, but clearly with an eye that they might be used as an occasional bench too. And while the general driving layout feels almost identical courtesy of the similar cabin dimensions, it really does feel like a separate model. If you secretly want a Mk2, you'll prefer the Daimler. But if you wish you had the driveway space for a

SPECIFICATION

1965 **JAGUAR S-TYPE 3.4 AUTO**

ENGINE: 3,442cc I6
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MkX, the S-type would be a far more fitting alternative.

Shocking as it might seem, we find the Daimler V8 a more sporting prospect than a 3.4 Mk2. That lovely revvy little engine might not quite have the poke of a Mk2, but it will rev all the way to the 6,000rpm redline and thank you for it. If the gearbox changed up just a little sooner under lighter loads it would perhaps be nicer, but to be frank that engine note makes you want to push the Daimler hard – you find yourself slowing just to take advantage of kickdown, letting that beautiful engine sing arias.

And as it's lighter than an XK, the front springing can be softer – improving not only the ride but the roadholding – and the steering accordingly feels lighter too. It's still not a car for those who like the delicate touch, but as an A-road wafter, the Daimler is an addictive machine. Despite the live axle, the ride is impressively good too – it almost feels like it doesn't really need independent rear suspension at all. But while we'd have the Daimler over a Mk2 from behind the wheel, how does it compare to the more modern S-type?

Throw the Jaguar into a corner and it will hold on even at relatively high speeds – the IRS setup filched from larger Jaguars makes itself felt, and you find yourself almost wanting to drive like a hooligan to take advantage of it. The steering is heavier than the Daimler and so there's more work involved in hauling it about, but it's a heavier car and a good chunk of that extra weight is over the nose – weighty steering is to be expected. The XK doesn't sound as good as the Turner V8 to our ears but it's still an evocative note, dampened in this case by its smaller 3.4 litre capacity and automatic gearbox which conspire to make the package feel more serene than sporting in nature. While undoubtedly a closer rival to the Daimler in this form, we can't help but think a 3.8 manual with power steering might have been a more entertaining prospect.

So the Daimler has more of a sense of fun, but the S-type is more accomplished. »

SPECIFICATION

1966 **DAIMLER 2.5 V8**

ENGINE: 2,548cc V8

POWER: 140bhp

TORQUE: 155lb ft

0-60MPH: 13.8secs

TOP SPEED: 113mph

ECONOMY: 18mpg

TRANSMISSION: 3-spd auto

PRICE NEW (1966): £1,676

VALUE NOW: £25,000-£35,000

> **"The S-type might look more different, but mechanically it's too similar to the existing Mk2 to offer owners a truly unique experience"**

The experiences are very different, but it's hard to pick an overall victor from behind the wheel.

CONCLUSION

So if in the current climate you can't afford a Mk2, or if you want something a little bit different, which of our pair should you choose? Well, it's a tricky one for once. Because each of these cars offers the would-be Mk2 buyer something genuinely different, and neither will be the perfect answer for everyone.

If the appeal of the Mk2 for you is its mechanical package, the S-type takes that and build upon it with the independent rear end that does improve roadholding and ride – the XK engine still sounds as good and goes as well in this application, and whether you prefer the longer tailed styling or can simply live with it (we're in the former category), it looks enough like a Mk2 not to disappoint when you open the garage door.

If however, the styling is the thing you love most about the Mk2, you will find it utterly unadulterated in Daimler form. The grille and rear plinth don't detract from the shape, and that original pert tail hold much more Mk2 DNA than that of the Jaguar above. The shared body means that you can take greater advantage of the ease of sourcing Mk2 panels, too, making it an easier car to keep in tip top shape.

And what about us? Well – to tell the truth, neither car offers quite the right solution. We prefer the longer tail and independent rear of the S-type, but have long been fans of Daimler's revvy little V8. In an ideal world there would have been a Daimler V8-S hybrid, but the 140bhp of the 2.5 litre unit would have felt slow in the heavier S-type shell. These two cars highlight what a shame it was that Jaguar didn't put the 4.5 litre V8 in the first 420-based Sovereign to make a true Mk2-based Majestic Major replacement, choosing instead to stick with the 4.2 XK. That would have been a truly charismatic and almost certainly undervalued classic – and it's because it shares those same qualities and that same V8 that we'll give the nod to the Daimler. By diverging mechanically, it feels like it's no longer a car that lives in the shadow of the Mk2, but an excellent classic saloon in its own right. The S-type might look more different, but mechanically it's too similar to the existing Mk2 to offer owners a truly unique experience. ■

THANKS TO: The Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust for supplying both cars.

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SETTING THE SCENE

The 2.4 was the starting point for decades of sporting Jaguar saloons. We examine one of the finest survivors

WORDS: **IAN SEABROOK** PHOTOGRAPHY: **IAN SEABROOK** AND **JIM HENSHAW**

It could be argued that Jaguar's reputation for sporting saloons really began with the 2.4 of 1955. While the MkVII was certainly surprisingly brisk, and handled well, it was the compact form of the 2.4 and a surprisingly low purchase price that helped the 2.4 find more homes, in Europe at least. While American buyers were happy enough with the large MkVII, European tastes were for something rather more suited to small, country lanes and the new 2.4 really fitted the bill. With motorsport success and a later, 120mph 3.4-litre version, these cars set the scene for everything that was to come from Jaguar.

Original dashboard sticker still in place
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Not that a compact saloon was a new idea for the Coventry firm. A hangover from the SS Cars days before the Second World War was the 1½-Litre, which used a four-cylinder Standard engine with Jaguar's overhead valve layout. It wasn't really sporting though, for all its fine lines. 70mph was rather hard work.

But thoughts of a new compact saloon were already firmly in the mind. Early on, the decision was taken to turn to monocoque construction, with independent front suspension. The influence of Citroën can be seen here, with Jaguar engineer Bill Heynes in particular impressed with the trend-setting Traction Avant. The XK120 and MkV would both use independent front suspension by torsion bar, as did the Citroën. The 2.4 would bring monocoque construction to the party, but the front suspension was now independent by coil spring. The clever touch, at the behest of chief engineer Bob Knight, was the use of subframes mounted on rubber, to keep noise and »

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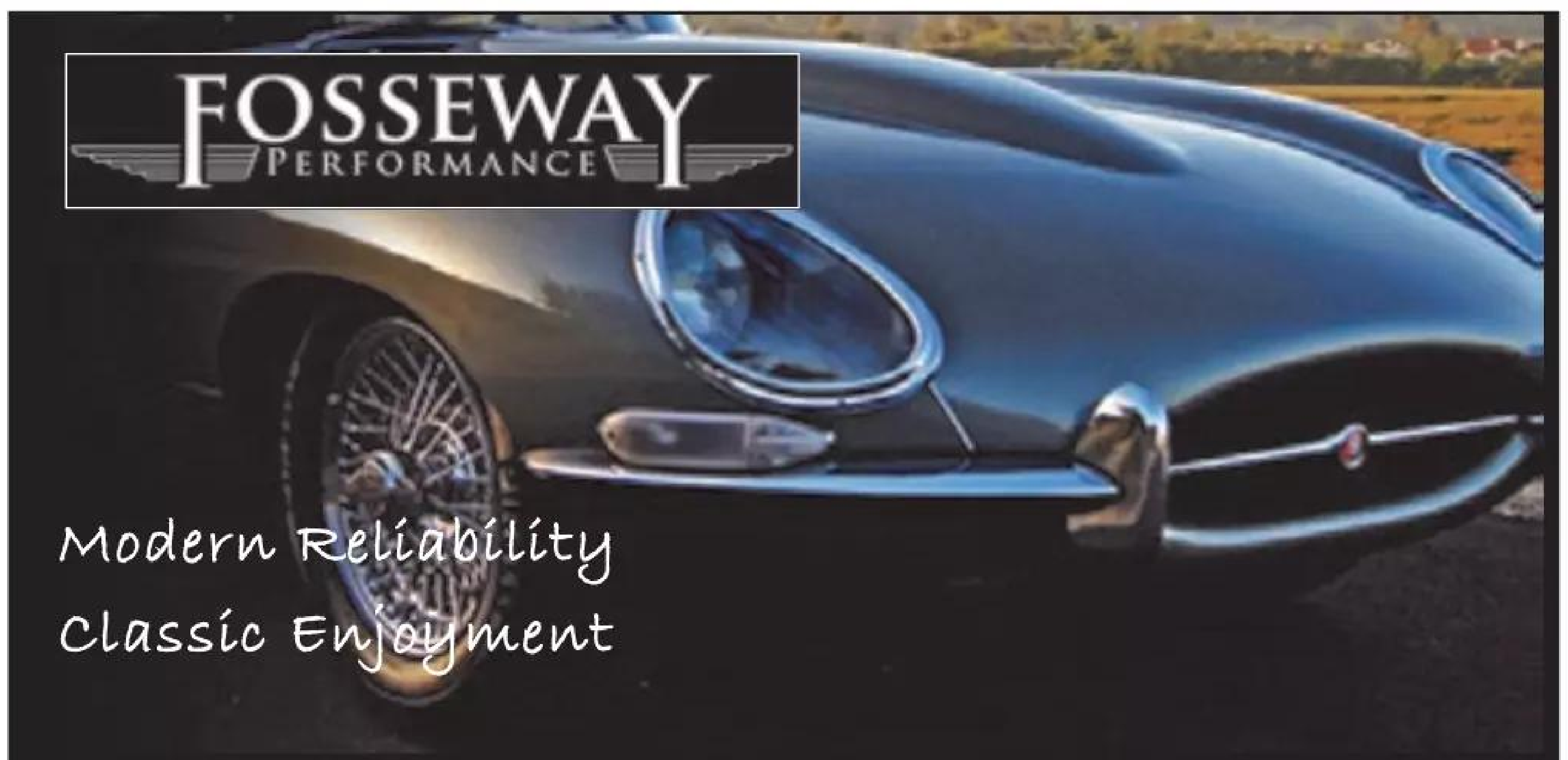

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harshness from entering the cabin. Even now, trademarks that would define Jaguars for decades to come were in place.

The 2.4 was launched at Browns Lane in September 1955, and its list price of £1,300 went down very well indeed. Taken against later compact saloon developments, the gentle 112bhp of the 2.4 may seem rather lethargic. In 1955, its 100mph top speed and 0-60mph time of 13 seconds were very reasonable indeed. A 1955 Austin A90 Westminster needed more like 18 seconds for the dash and was all done by 91mph, despite having a larger engine. Then there was the handling too. Belgian journalist Paul Frére won a race in that very first year, though the rear track, some four inches narrower than the front, did not entirely help its road manners.

Rather more performance was on offer with the 3.4 of 1957, which advertised its potential with cut-down rear spats – all the better to clear centre-lock wire wheels. 120mph was now within reach on a good day, and acceleration was very strong. From 1957, you could even specify disc brakes on both models. Really, the formula was being pushed hard now though, so the Mk2 that took over from 1959 would include a wider rear track in its list of improvements. It was at this point that the earlier 2.4 and 3.4 became known as the Mk1.

The Mk1 today

It took a long time for the compact Jaguars to find their place in the classic marketplace, and even so, it's only really the Mk2 that easily gains the plaudits, especially in 3.8 form. Others have taken a lot longer to find favour, which is one reason that the Mk1 has become rather a rare sight. That's a shame, because they really are one of the best saloons of the 1950s. They have style, a fine interior and plenty of performance for most people, even in 2.4 form. With its full wheel spats, the 2.4 is arguably the most handsome of the compact saloons, though opinions do vary on the matter!

Finding good examples is really therefore rather special, and when Jim Henshaw alerted me to this one during his work commissioning cars for Brightwells Auctioneers & Valuers, I was very keen to find out more.

Incredibly, this immaculate 2.4 has covered fewer than 27,000 miles in its 58 years, and it has managed to avoid the need for restoration, due to »

Wonderful veneer dashboard is in first rate condition

Rear styling links to XK sports cars

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2.4 introduced monocoque construction to Jaguar's range

"Fred's wife worked at my primary school"

Fog lamps added a touch of class

Leather seats are wonderfully creased by age

unscrupulous care by its three owners. The car was first registered to WR Powell in Talgarth, Brecon in Wales. He paid £1,538, though received £500 in part exchange for his Ford Zephyr.

Award-winning

He appears to have used the car gently, before it was sold locally to Powell's friend Fred Lloyd. Lloyd had already been looking after the car for Powell, and took the chance to take it on. He then began entering it in Concours events organised by the Jaguar Drivers' Club, and there are photos of the car with trophies as far back as 1978.

The current owner purchased the car from Lloyd in 2015, but has kept up the regime of sparing use and good care – though not quite as much as Lloyd, who apparently kept the car in a room of his house. All three owners lived within a few miles of each other, but current owner Jim Beagley recalls seeing the car as a child. "Fred's wife worked at my primary school, so I can remember seeing the car when I was child. I think I saw it for the first time in 1980, so it has always been a part of my life. Fred has had the door jambs painted, and a stainless steel exhaust, but otherwise, it's very original."

That's apparent as soon as you clamber aboard, with that lovely smell of wood and leather that so typifies British cars of this era. The leather shows some gentle signs of ageing, but that just adds to this car's appeal. It's not a workshop-fresh restoration, but a car that has simply been very well cared for and used sparingly. You can even still see the original dealer sticker on the top rail of the dashboard. »

Styling would gently evolve into Mk2 and S-Type

The same is true of the paintwork, which has a deep shine to it, but isn't perfect. Look closely, and you can see fine scratches picked up through years and years of polishing. Again, this just hints at age rather than detracting from the experience. The brightwork all looks as good as new however, including the fine hubcaps. I much prefer them to fussy wires. You can also appreciated Sir William Lyons' styling skill as you absorb the fluid lines of the Mk1. The nose treatment is especially pretty, backed up by that tapering rear which links the car to the XK range. The way the roof flows into the rear quarters is very much a streamlined version of the SS era saloons.

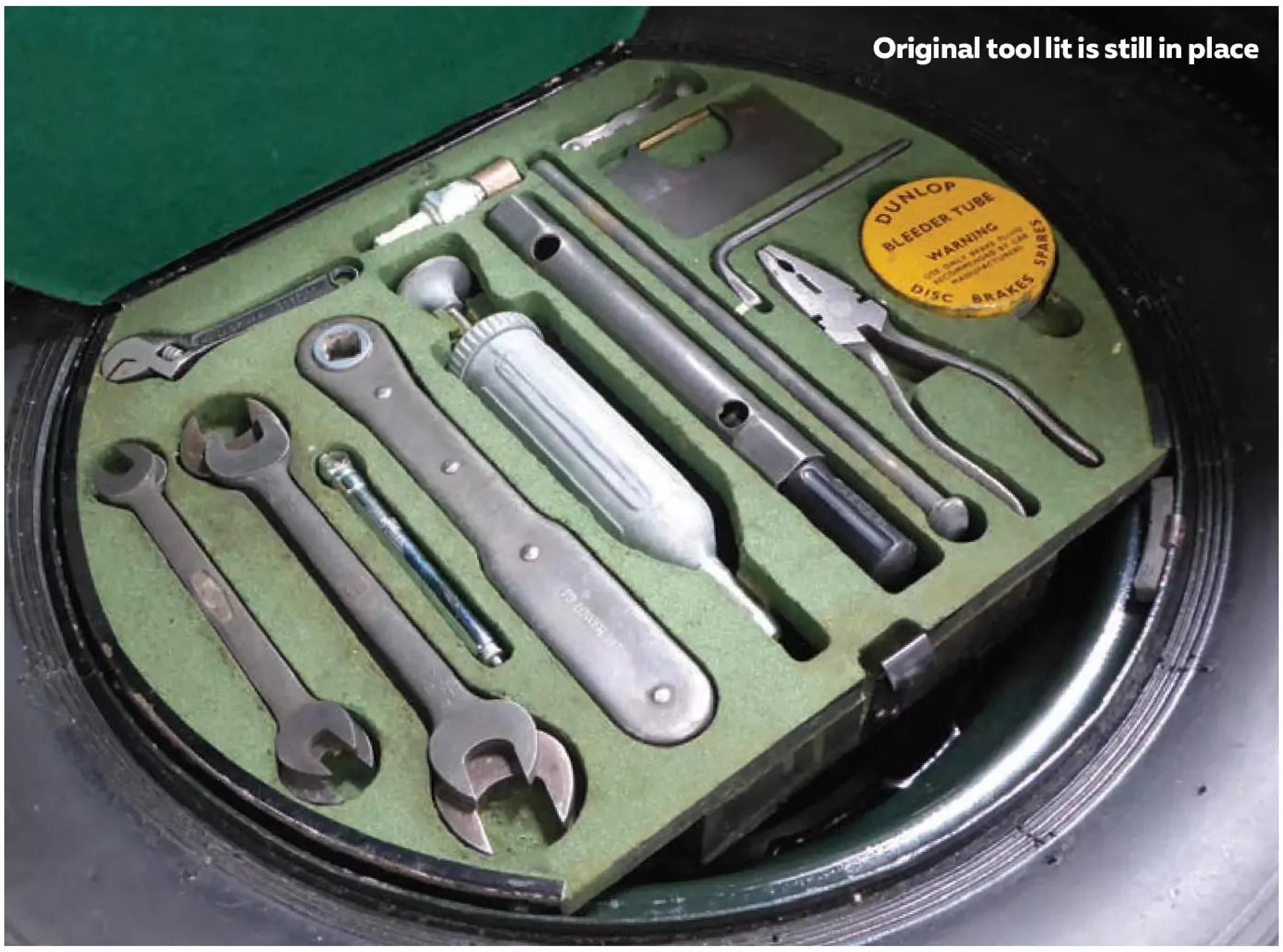
Exceptional detail

The detail is exceptional under the bonnet too, with stickers still in place to advertise Trico windscreen washer fluid and to urge you to change your wiper blades every year. It's spotless under here, and only some minor tarnishing on the exhaust manifold shows any sign of age at all. Minor details really leap out here, like the original bakelite battery cover and radiator fan cowling.

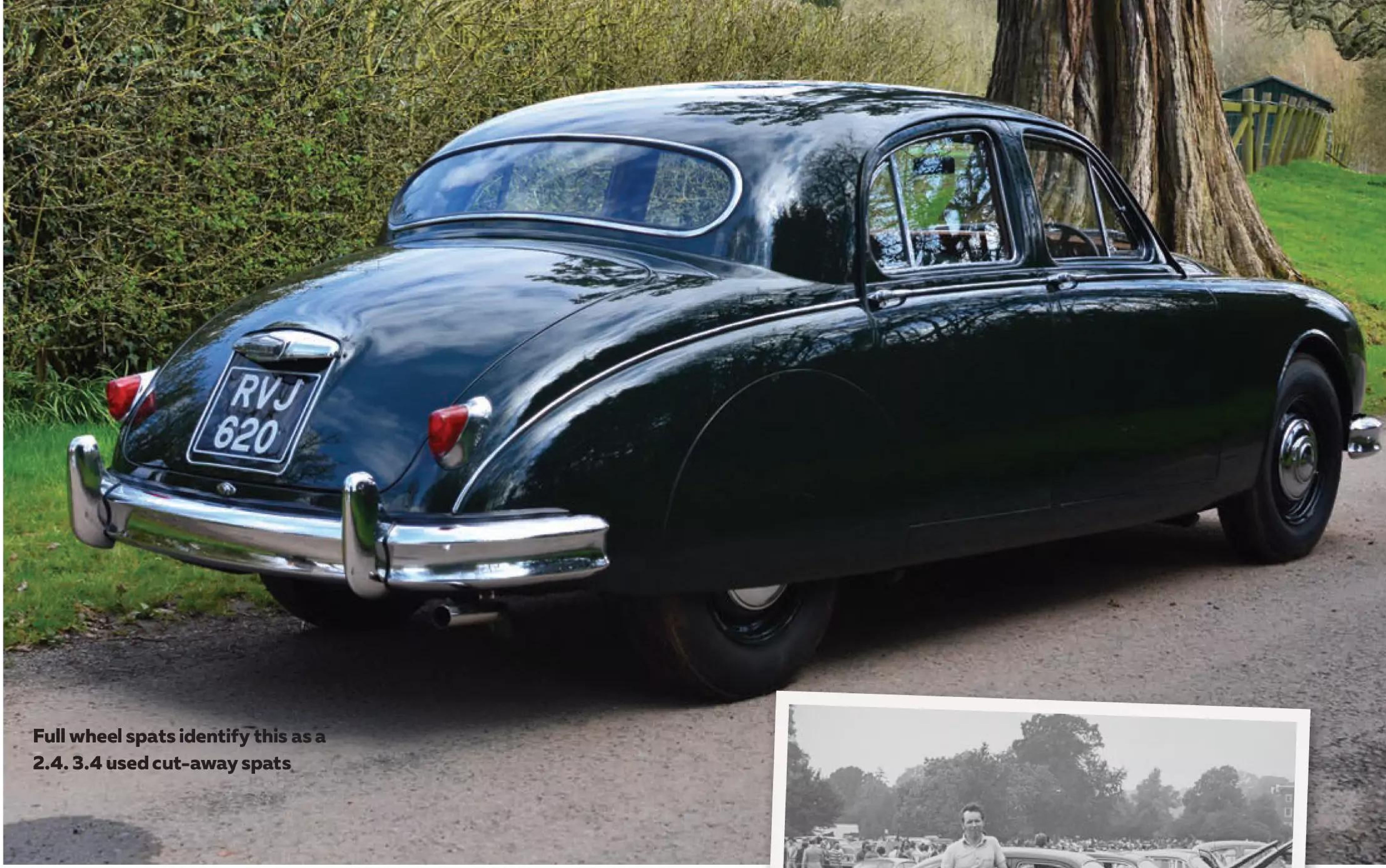
When asked to, the engine doesn't so much fire into life as gently gather pace until it is suddenly running. There's a gentle exhaust burble but the overall feeling is of exceptional smoothness. Jump aboard and the comfortable driving position is immediately apparent. The large steering wheel helps take some of the heaviness out of the steering and the only slight ergonomic failure is the gear lever, which sits too far forward and requires

Short gearlever doesn't fall neatly to hand

Lovely reversing light detail – a rare item in the mid 1950s



Original tool lit is still in place


Full wheel spats identify this as a 2.4. 3.4 used cut-away spats

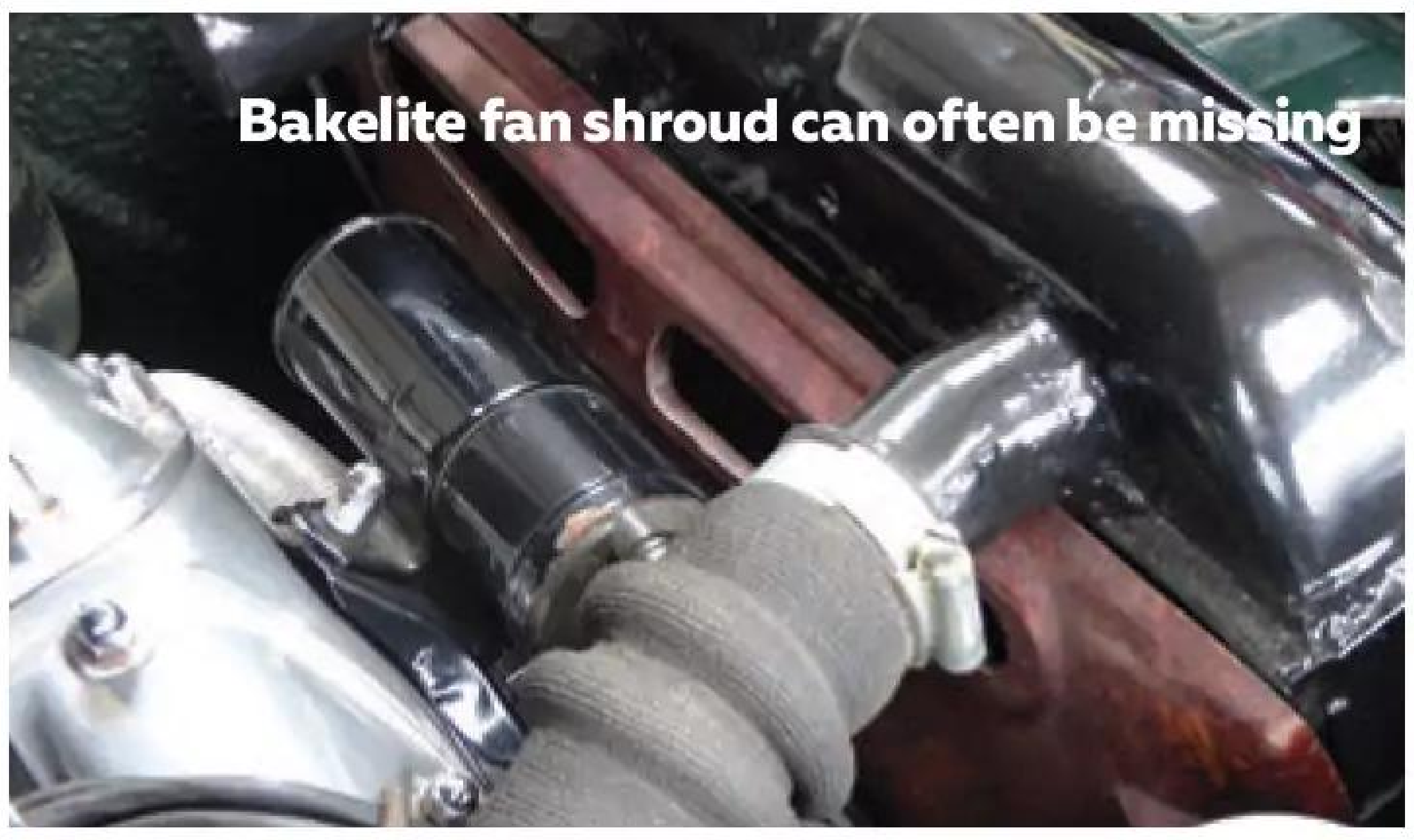
Second owner Fred Lloyd at a Jaguar Drivers' Club event in 1978

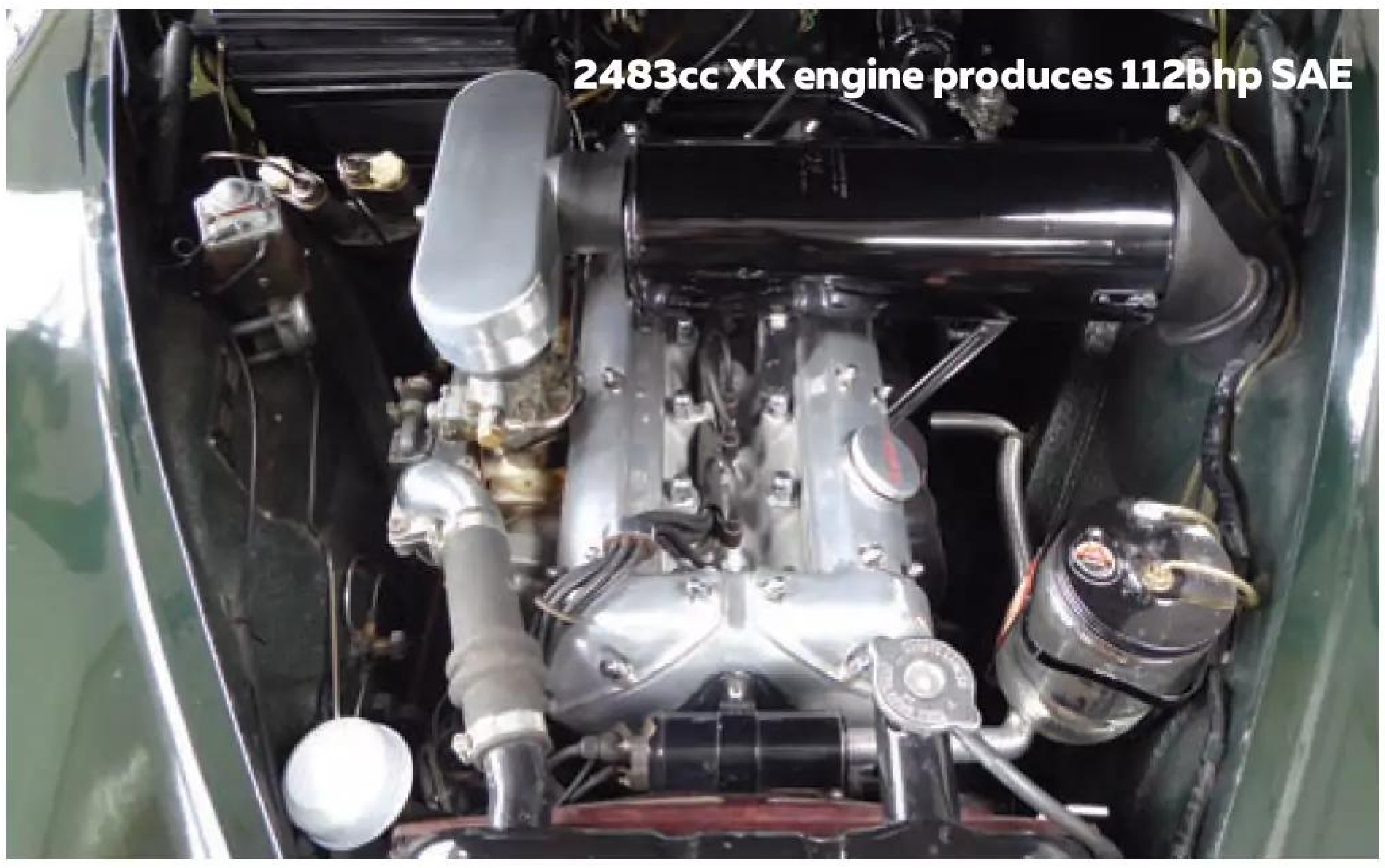
a surprisingly long movement from first to second. It certainly doesn't fall nicely to hand. The action is also a little on the vague side, though there are no troubles finding the necessary gears. It's just that the gate does not seem particularly well defined.

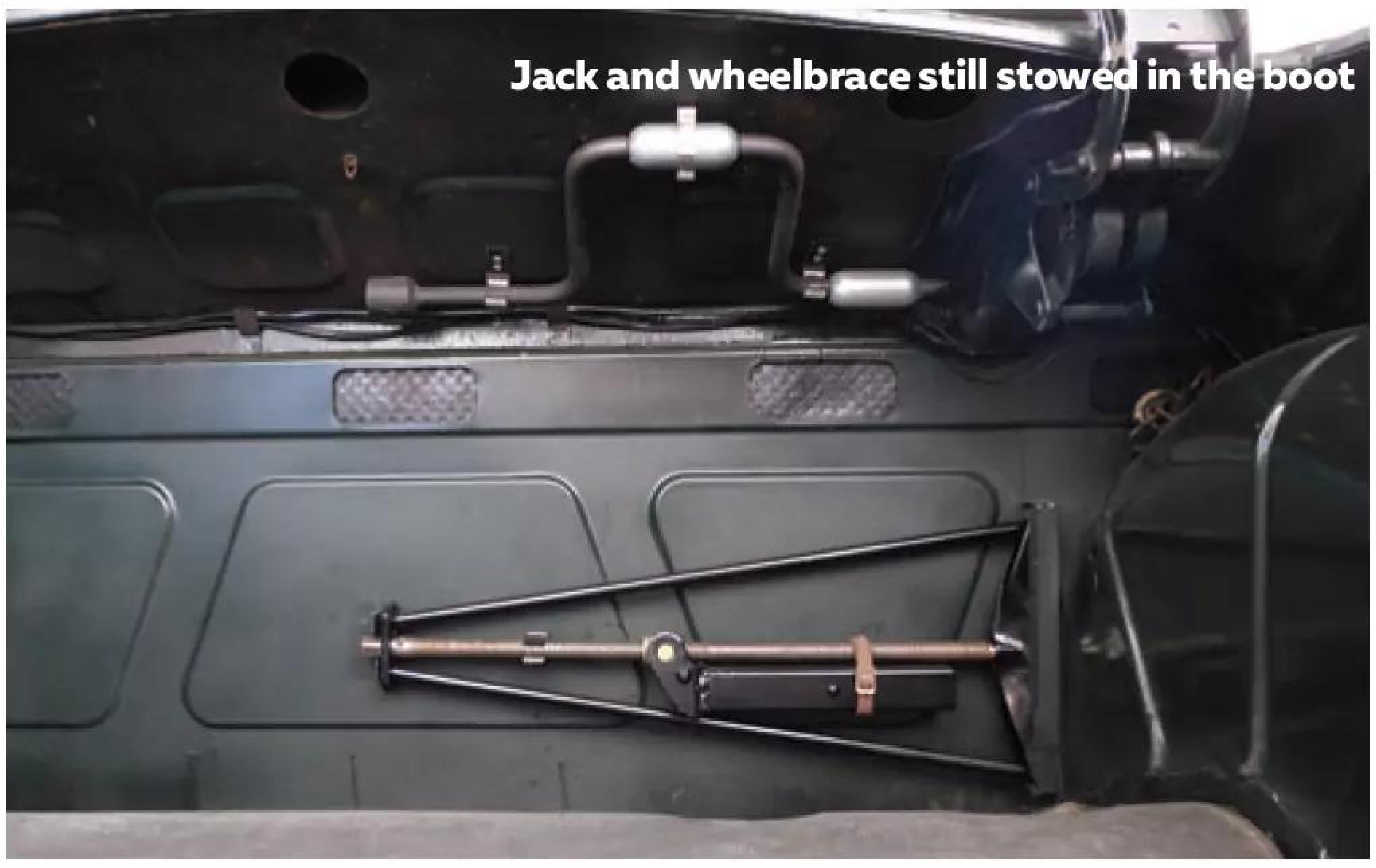
Out on the road, poor weather sadly curtailed a full exploration of the 2.4's potential, but we certainly had enough time to feel just how delightfully tight this car remains. The original Moss gearbox has a delicious, non-synchro first gear whine that reminds you how old this car really is. Otherwise, you could be forgiven for thinking it a vehicle from the 1960s. After all, it's only really in the company of other Jaguars that the performance could be described as leisurely. Tractable and effortless too of course, both hallmarks of the XK engine, especially in fine fettle.

Sure, the ride can't match the magnificent floating serenity of later Jaguars, there are still leaf springs at the rear after all, but while it can be a little bouncy at times, it's a long way from uncomfortable. Refinement certainly remains absolutely first rate, which is a credit to Bob Knight and his clever use of subframes. The difference this makes is quite astounding compared to other large, monocoque cars of this era.

All in all, this is a car which mixes traditional with a later, more urgent feel. It's certainly a credit to its three owners and a car any Jaguar fan would surely be very happy to own. ■


Bakelite fan shroud can often be missing


2483cc XK engine produces 112bhp SAE


Jack and wheelbrace still stowed in the boot

TRACK CHANGES

Thanks to its experiences in motorsport, the ultimate Mk2 is one with modifications by Coombs of Guildford. We look at the history of Coombs' relationship with Jaguar before trying a rare genuine example

WORDS: **PAUL WALTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **STUART COLLINS**

LONG BEFORE Jaguar made faster versions of its cars, John Coombs was doing so from his Guildford-based garage for the Mk2. Based on his experiences in motorsport, from making the body lighter to giving the engine more power, the serious of updates resulted in a fast and genuinely race-bred model that's considered today as the ultimate version of the always popular compact saloon.

Although rare, highly collectible and often copied, to explain what makes the car so important as well as Coombs' long association with Jaguar, we've managed to track down a genuine example. »

“One of Roy’s best races with the Mk2 was at the May Silverstone in 1960”

The origins of Coombs of Guildford started in the late 19th century when William Coombs opened a blacksmith, wheel write and later coachbuilder who in the early 1900s transformed the business into a garage and car dealership. William’s son, John (born 1 February 1922) served his apprentice with the family business before eventually taken over in 1947.

When his father had taken him to the Brooklands circuit in the late Twenties, John soon became interested in motorsport and in 1949 started competing himself initially with a Cooper powered by an engine sourced from a Rover 10. “We were Rover dealers,” explained Coombs about the unusual choice of power during an interview in the May 2009 issue of *Motorsport* magazine, “and Maurice Wilks of Rover helped us. It was too heavy, really, but we got it to rev to 6,500rpm.” He soon upgraded to Formula 3 and due to being fast and his cars always immaculately prepared – something he would later become renowned for – Coombs enjoyed his fair share of success, winning races across Europe.

But due to the pressures of running the business, Coombs retired from racing in the early Fifties to concentrate on the dealership which by now included Jaguar.

As one of the country’s largest agents for the marque, Coombs had a close working relationship with the Coventry-based factory whose management would often seek his advice. “From time to time I’d be summoned to Coventry for lunch,” he continued in *Motorsport*. “Sir William Lyons’ office overlooked the car park, with Alice Fenton’s office on one side – she’d been with him since the Blackpool days – and Lofty England’s on the other. If you arrived in anything other than a Jaguar, by the time you got to reception there’d be a message from Mr England: ‘Kindly get that thing off the forecourt and park it out of sight.’ Lunch would be in the directors’ section of the works canteen, no liquor of course. Lyons sat at the head of the table. ‘Good morning, Coombs, how are things going?’ ‘Very well, thank you, Sir William.’ ‘Tell me, what do you find are the popular colours at the moment?’”

By being lightweight, agile yet powerful, it was only natural Coombs prepared a 3.4 saloon for racing which was entered through his separate team, John Coombs Racing Organisation. Although with Roy Salvadori or double Le Mans winner, Ron Flockhart, at the wheel the little saloon was often victorious, it was the Mk2 that debuted in the 1960 season that forever linked Coombs with Jaguar. With Salvadori again driving – who had first met John when they both competed in Formula 3 several years earlier – the Coombs Mk2 quickly became the one to beat

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in saloon car racing, winning several events. The most important of these was the 1960 Production Touring Car Race at Silverstone which was made all the more satisfying when Salvadori beat Stirling Moss in another Mk2 entered by Coomb's main rival, Tommy Sopwith's Equipe Endeavour outfit.

"One of Roy's best races with the Mk2 was at the May Silverstone in 1960," remembered Coombs in the May 2013 issue of *Motorsport*. "The rivalry between me and Sopwith was pretty intense now, and Tommy lined up Stirling Moss to drive his car. Roy led to start with, then Stirling got by and led for eight laps, then Roy got through on the inside at Stowe and led to the finish. Afterwards Stirling complained that Roy had been tapping the brake pedal going into corners to flash the brake lights and try to make Stirling brake earlier. Roy said he'd only been switching the headlights on and off to move backmarkers out of the way. All good stuff.

The competition Mk2s were prepared at Coombs' own Guildford-based workshop. "We built up the cars ourselves," he continued in *Motorsport*. "We'd buy naked bodyshells from Jaguar, take off all the lead, weld the seams to make them stiffer, and take out everything we didn't need. Then, to get back to the legal weight, we'd put blocks of lead low down in the floor to get it to handle as we wanted."

Thanks to the success of his racing cars, Coombs quickly realised there was a wider market for the modifications that made them so fast. "We offered some of the engine and chassis tweaks on our road cars, and occasionally a customer would say, 'I want a Mk2 exactly like the racing cars. Can I buy one?' I'd say, 'Yes, we can do it, but with the welded seams and everything it'll be ridiculous money.' 'I don't mind, I'll pay.' That made it a completely different car."

Just as with the racing models, Coombs of Guildford would strip excess weight, weld the body seams for stiffness before strategically placing lead blocks low in the floor to balance the handling. Engine updates included higher-compression pistons, a lighter flywheel, top-end work and open trumpet intakes. The cylinder head could also be machined for an even higher 9.5:1 compression ratio and a cold-air intake was offered as were several exhaust options. To improve the Mk 2's handling, Coombs fitted adjustable dampers, stiffer front springs and an anti-roll bar while a quicker-ratio steering box could also be ordered.

Available for new or used cars and only fitted at Coombs' Guildford garage, »

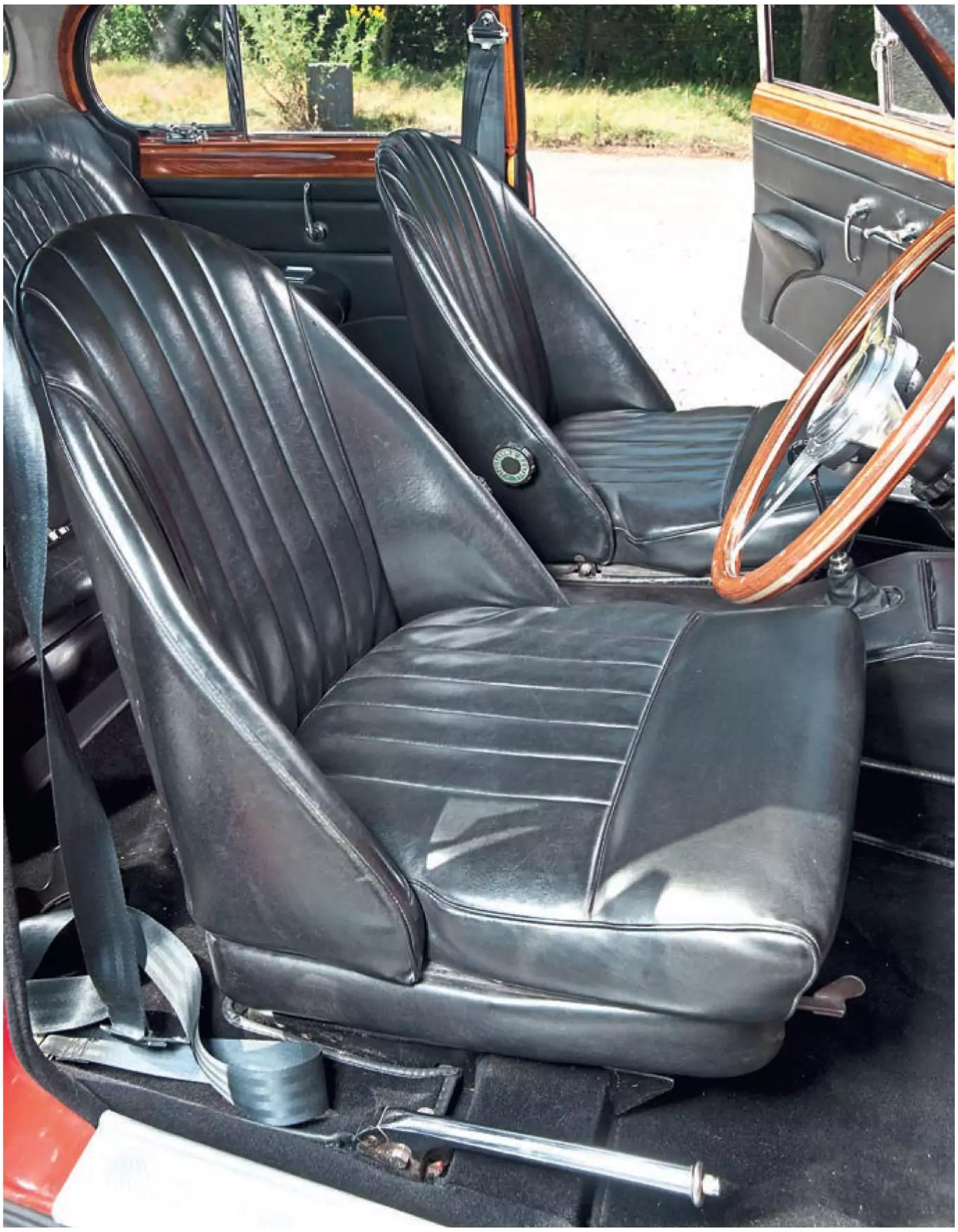
the modifications could be chosen individually from a menu meaning there was never an exact specification.

Yet despite this and the company always being independent, the increased speed and improved handling the modifications resulted in quickly saw the Coombs Mk2 3.8-litre become the model's unofficial flagship. This together with their rarity – it's believed between 30 and 35 were built – has seen them become highly collectible and today a Coombs Mk2 demands a premium over a standard example. It's also why owners have always made their own but even if period parts are used, if not fitted by Coombs of Guildford, they're considered replicas.

The car seen here has been verified a genuine example by Ken Bell, a former Coombs of Guildford engineer who worked on several of the cars. It was originally sold to a friend of John Coombs, Peter Scott-Russell, who chose a high ratio steering box, 9:1 compression pistons, lightened flywheel, high lift cams, bigger valves, 2in SU carburettors, stiffer and lowered suspension with wider anti roll pick up points and a free flow exhaust. Physically it differed from the standard car by blended rear arches while at the rear was strengthened rear seat pan. Due to competing in club races during the Seventies, racing seats by Restall were later added as were extra gauges for the temperature and oil pressure in the centre console.

With its wider wheelarches and matt black wire wheels, the Coombs has a definitely more masculine appearance than a standard car and although other than the discreet window sticker in the rear screen there isn't a Coombs badge, it's still obvious the car's heritage was born on the track.

That's made further obvious the moment I climb inside and sit in the surprisingly comfortable Restall bucket seat and press the button on the centre console to start to the 3.8-litre XK unit. It churns into life immediately, having a slightly gruffer exhaust note than normal. The car feels fast from the outset, the 9:1 compression ratio



and larger valves helping to make the engine feel crisper and a little more eager than the 3.8-litre usually does. The Coombs engine updates are said to increase the power of the engine from its standard 220bhp to a far racier 300. So, after I blip the throttle and change down, I'm instantly rewarded with large amounts of torque that propels me for with an unexpected forcefulness.

Yet despite the thuggishness of its performance the car still offers some precision: the sharp steering gives the Mk2 a nimbleness arguably lacking from standard models while the four-speed Moss 'box has all the accuracy of a Swiss train station clock. Although the ride lacks a little of the standard car' suppleness, it's still not uncomfortable. Just as it was then, the Coombs Mk2 remains a car you drive to the track with, win a race, and then drive home again.

Realising neither the Mk2 nor the E-type (which his team had raced since 1961), would be competitive for much longer, in 1964 Coombs took the momentous decision to move into Formula 2. "Our Jaguar programme had done a lot for the name of Coombs of Guildford, but Jaguars weren't going to win any more," he explained in 2009.

Perhaps even more controversially, in 1979 he severed his links with the brand he had long been synonymous with, saying in 2009, "I gave up on Jaguar during the British Leyland fiasco and switched to BMW." He retired to Monaco in 1981 and sold his dealership eight years later; it still exists but has been renamed Vines of Guildford. Coombs passed away in Monaco in 2013, his name forever linked to the faster Mk2s he created.

Although Jaguar has long produced its own faster cars such as the 2009 XFR also featured in this issue, with the company supposedly going electric only from 2025, it means models like this will be no more. And so as much faster cars based on standard models, they all finished what Coombs of Guildford started. ■

HIDDEN GEM

By spending the majority of its life hidden in a St Louis garage, this 1960 Mk2 3.8 remains in a remarkably original condition. Recently repatriated to the UK by only its second owner, the car has been lightly recommissioned making it ready to be enjoyed once again

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: **PAUL WALTON**

"SOME CARS are destined to be in your garage," Marcus Jones tells me. "Len is one of those." The 'Len' he's talking about is a 1960 Mk2 3.8 with a remarkable history that has resulted in a remarkable condition.

Yet Marcus wouldn't have known anything about it if it wasn't for another recently exhumed Mk2 he found for sale in St Louis that we featured in the February 2021 issue of sister title *Jaguar World* (p70).

"In September 2020 and after posting pictures on a Jaguar Facebook group of the car being loaded for transport to the docks, I was contacted by a gentleman called Mike," explains Marcus. "Mike explained that his father had a car like the one I had posted pictures of and he needed to sell it. Pictures were not immediately available since it was at his father's house in Berwyn, Illinois, and not easily accessible due to the domestic debris that had accumulated over the many years it had been stored."

Despite just buying his first Mk2, Mike's description piqued Marcus' interest and at the risk of "wrath from my other half" asked for pictures. What Marcus eventually saw was even better than he imagined. "They appeared to show a complete car that clearly had not moved a wheel for many years. Finally, Mike sent me a picture of the chassis plate and I could confirm that the car was an early 3.8 MOD [manual with overdrive] which pretty much sealed my and the car's fate."

The story how it got to be in this condition was even more amazing. According to Mike, in 1960 his father (called Len) bought a brand new, Pearl Grey Mk2 3.8 from his local dealership in St Louis. "It was his pride and joy," says Marcus, "and Len kept the car for the remainder of his life, resisting the calls to sell it."

According to Mike, with Len's young family outgrowing the car, his Jaguar was used less and less and after being replaced with a van as the family's main mode of transport, the Mk2 was garaged in 1967, becoming a den for his three kids to play in.

"Len occasionally ran the old Jaguar around the block," continues Marcus, "his appetite for longer journeys curtailed by the lack of an up to date licence for the car and by the early Eighties, the »

Jaguar was effectively entombed in the garage, with 35,000 miles on the clock but retaining happy family memories for him." By early 2020, though, and in poor health, Len decided it was time to sell the car.

After hearing the Mk2's unique story and that it was a rare 3.8, Marcus decided he had to have it, doing the deal with Mike over the internet. But before the grey saloon could be shipped to the UK, it had to be uninterred from its garage tomb.

"Retrieving the Jaguar took a while as firstly the area had to be cleared. Then Mike had to coax air into tyres that had been very flat for many years." Finally, in early November 2020, the grey Jaguar was free and ready for collection for transportation to England, its first outing in over 40 years.

Other than Covid-19 slightly delaying the departure date, Marcus tells me bringing the Mk2 back to the UK was relatively straight forward, arriving at a snowy Felixstowe port in February 2021. The car was soon on its way to P&K Thornton, the classic Jaguar specialist based outside Nottingham that looks after Marcus' collection of cars for an initial assessment and eventually to be brought back to life.

Thankfully, the car was as good as the pictures suggested. "Initial inspections on the ramp showed it to be sound underneath," Marcus tells me, "but as you would expect, in dire need of a significant overhaul to remedy the impact of the passage of time."

As with the other unrestored Mk2 (which Marcus now calls 'Luigi') plus his low-mileage, American export 1976 XJ-S, he has no plans to improve Len cosmetically, preferring originality over perfection.

This is made clear to me when I visit to P&K Thornton's premises in early November to see the car; with the original grey paint covered in several scratches, the body in a few dents

> **"Finally, in early November 2020, the grey Jaguar was free and ready for collection for transportation to England, its first outing in over 40 years"**

while even the Mk2 boot badge is broken in two, it's a long way from the pristine head-turner it must have been when Len the man first bought it. Yet these give Len the Jaguar a memorable character that restoration would lose; every one of these imperfections has a story and together make the car unique.

Part of the car's appeal for Marcus was, other than a missing headlight (now replaced), it was largely complete which continues inside. The blue leather upholstery is badly cracked and the gear lever gaiter is slowly disintegrating. According to Mike, the poor state of the seats is down to wear and tear caused by the exuberant activities of him and his two siblings as they played inside the car. However, all of the correct dials are still in place – the odometer in the speedo still reading a paltry 35,175 – making it totally original. And that's not all.

"Len had an expensive Becker radio fitted and a full Abarth sports exhaust," says Marcus. "The latter sadly parted »

company with the car during the voyage from Linden New Jersey to Felixstowe." However, the car still has the original tool kit and Mike supplied all the documentation Len was given when he bought the car in 1960, including the pamphlet issued by Jaguar Cars Inc inviting the owner to join the Jaguar Drivers Club plus a warranty for the Becker radio.

As further proof of the car's 40 year slumber, a Chicago licence sticker from 1967 remains on the screen while a petrol receipt for the princely sum of $3.00 dated 25 September, 1967, was found inside. Was this the final fuel Len put into the tank before it was kept in the garage for good? We'll never know but it all adds to the car's mystique.

Although Marcus gave strict instructions not to touch the Mk2 cosmetically, he still wants to drive it, so P&K Thornton has done whatever it's

needed to make the engine run and Len the Jaguar roadworthy once again.

"This was definitely not a restoration," says P&K Thornton's Ciprian 'Chip' Nistorica with a laugh. "We just wanted to get it running so Marcus can make good use of it."

Yet despite clearly not being started for a long time, Chip admits the engine would still turn. "We didn't take the head off but took the sump off and checked the bearing which were ok." The carburettors were replaced while the valve clearances, which were way off, adjusted. The only modern addition was a brand new 123ignition distributor system. The fuel were replaced plus the tank was removed, cleaned and repaired where required.

The only rust P&K Thornton found was under the radiator grille (a common area for corrosion for these cars) plus there was hole at the top of the nearside wing around the sidelight which was soon repaired. Obviously the area hasn't been painted and instead been left in grey primer.

The original, now-square tyres were replaced ("Still holding air after their trip across the Atlantic!" exclaims Marcus) and finally the car received a full service. "I did ask P&K Thornton to stamp the service record, which came with the car."

After almost 40 years since the car was last used in anger, following being »

"This was definitely not a restoration," says P&K Thornton's Ciprian 'Chip' Nistorica with a laugh. "We just wanted to get it running so Marcus can make good use of it"

registered with the UK's DVLA, the Mk2 was back on the road, its first proper journey was to the Jaguar Drivers' Club National Day event on 24-25 July, 2021, at Walton Hall in Warwickshire, a round trip of 300 miles from Marcus' home in Lincolnshire. Despite the Mk2's condition, Marcus tells me it still attracted plenty of positive comments and questions about its history. He also reckons Len is perfect for a HERO navigation rally in 2022 and is currently being prepared appropriately.

After Marcus kindly offers me a drive of Len, I begin to understand why he feels it's suitable for competition. The Mk2 is a range-topping 3.8-litre, don't forget, that when new would have had 220bhp meaning after I squeeze the throttle, the resultant performance is strong and gutsy, belying both the car's age and its physical appearance. But apparently, when P&K Thornton coaxed the engine into life, the straight six still had excellent compression, was not noisy and did not smoke.

The steering is reasonably sharp and accurate while the new Koni shock absorbers Chip has fitted all round means there's little body roll. The ride is perhaps a little hard but

then, unlike Jaguar's later saloons, the Mk2 never had Jaguar's ground-breaking independent rear suspension, having instead a live rear axle plus cantilever semi-elliptic springs. Yet together with excellent stopping power due to the new brake discs, Len still illustrates why the 3.8 model was always the first choice for both racing drivers and bank robbers during the Sixties.

Len the man sadly passed away in March 2021, but two weeks prior to his passing, Marcus sent him and his family a video of the Mk2's engine running once again. Although a long way from home, I'm sure it gave him comfort knowing his once pride and joy is to be used once again.

The dents and scrapes from lying dormant for 40 years might suggest otherwise, but between Len's 60-year ownership and Marcus' burning desire to have it in his garage, I doubt there's a Mk2 as well-cared for as this one. ■

THANKS TO: Marcus Jones plus P&K Thornton (www.thorntonrestorations.com)

"I'm sure it gave him comfort knowing his once pride and joy is to be used once again"

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MURPHY'S LAW

You may have read about Peter's adventurous outings with his Mk2 many times within the pages of *Classic Jaguar*, but behind the scenes everything hasn't all gone to plan. This time he relates the story of his ownership - and it's not for the squeamish!

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: **PETER SIMPSON**

The Mk2's first photoshoot as Peter stops off at Glamis Castle on the day of purchase. The engine had died out

I bought my 1963 Mk2 3.4 four years ago, preparing a justification in advance running along the lines of "classics don't really lose money as long as they are well-maintained, so what I borrow from my pension pot today I can put back when I sell it". The idea was to employ the car extensively on tours, something which has certainly happened, but the capricious phenomenon of fate has rather messed about with the timings. At one point I did begin to call the car 'Murphy' as an automotive embodiment of the law – if anything can go wrong it will go wrong. And it did...

I realised from the outset that I possessed little discernible aptitude for mechanics so sensibly searched for a solid, useable Mk2 with a cherished history. I heard of such a car that came with several recommendations from prominent members of a well-known Jaguar club. The ostensibly knowledgeable and competent owner had continuously maintained the car for twenty years and it was widely travelled; a UK model that had lived in America for some years and now frequently commuted between homes in Scotland and the south of France. I gazed with awe at the ancient receipts in the history file from garages in New Mexico and Arizona, picturing the Mk2 romping through the desert, tumbleweed crossing its path....

The car drove very nicely on the day of my test drive, beneath warm, cloudless skies providing distant views to the Scottish Highlands. I could picture my future self behind that magnificent bonnet leaper as we traversed the high passes, joyfully reliving a golden age of Jaguar exploration.

Naturally I should have arranged a thorough inspection, but the summer was marching on and the glowing endorsements gave comfort, so I bought the car on sight and eagerly set off on the long journey home. Within a few miles I stopped for photographs leaving the Mk2 ticking over, but within seconds it began to choke and die. I knew the car had not been used much that year and assumed a simple mixture adjustment was required so didn't let it spoil the euphoria of the day. We made it home and the next morning I moved it out onto the drive for a full day's »

A dream fulfilled. Eight months after purchase the Mk2 takes its first major tour, seen here coping admirably with the snowy roads of Glencoe

cleaning and to satisfy neighbourhood curiosity. With the task completed and a crowd gazing in admiration, I pushed the starter - but it wouldn't fire. I assumed it was flooded, tapped the float chambers, cleaned the plugs, and waited a while, but still no joy. The next morning, I called a mechanic, but he couldn't start it either and 'phoned for the tow-truck, which provided a thrilling show for the spectators.

The news from the garage wasn't good. They reported that I had bought a dog (not a cat) and I didn't see the car again for two months. Classic car garages can be notoriously slow in completing work and, whilst this can provide a useful winter storage opportunity, it was still late-summer, and I was madly keen to be out on the open road. When I took again possession, I paid a hefty bill which included a new electronic ignition system, coil, spark plugs, battery, most of the ignition wiring, all fuel pipes, a carburettor overhaul and much more. Apparently, the brake fluid was the consistency of jam and the brake servo swung loose with flamboyant esprit. I was also informed the car overheated whilst in the workshop leading to the installation of a new thermostat and electric fan.

The day after I brought the Mk2 home it wouldn't start again. It went back to the garage on the tow-truck (more ignominy in front of twitching curtains) but on its return was still unable to idle without fading away. There followed some loss of confidence in this garage and a few heated exchanges. I may well have misguidedly bought a duffer, but I felt insulted when repeatedly told what an idiot I was for having done so.

Conversely, I wasn't impressed with the fact that the garage had patently failed to cure the erratic cold-running issues, the lumpy idle and engine running-on. So we parted company.

I next contacted a local Classic Car Club and was advised of a general mechanic many of their members used. This chap thought the new carburettor needles were wrong, changed the plugs again and altered the timing.

The redoubtably chromed rear quarters are an impressive characteristic of the Mk2

Woodwork was about the only item that did not need to be added to Peter's shopping list

Afterwards the car ran a little better but was still unpredictable. What to do?

Whilst pondering on this and out for a drive one day the gear lever came off in my hand. The breakdown service didn't bother to try a roadside fix, merely called the tow-truck. I'm sure most of my neighbours just happened to be out in the garden when Murphy arrived home. I took off the centre cowling to reveal the gearbox and managed to temporarily cable tie the lever mounting back on, then drove it to the current mechanic who welded it all back together.

A few days later, when exiting a motorway, I applied the brakes to discover, rather disconcertingly, that the pedal reached the floor. Pumping it brought no improvement, with gravity as a conspirator on the downward slanting slip road. Thankfully there was enough distance for downshifting and gentle application of the handbrake to bring us to halt before the traffic lights. A brake pipe had sheared, expelling all fluid during my motorway jaunt and to add insult the low fluid level indicator was not wired correctly, thus unable to warn me of the danger in advance. I was beginning to wonder whether this car was some sort of automotive tribulation imbued with malevolent intentions.

The bills had racked up yet the calamities continued unabated, so I decided to call in the big boys. Surely a dedicated Classic Jaguar specialist would get the car sorted properly once and for all?

I chose a well-known establishment whose impressive facilities were akin to a classic car health farm. The car received yet another carburettor overhaul with all new parts to replace the new parts that had replaced the previously new parts…

One addition was a Filter King Fuel Regulator as they claimed high fuel pressure was causing the flooding. The frequent running-on was attributed to an incorrectly wired fan circuit fitted by the first garage. Of course, I expected this specialist to be more expensive but was initially pleased to discover »

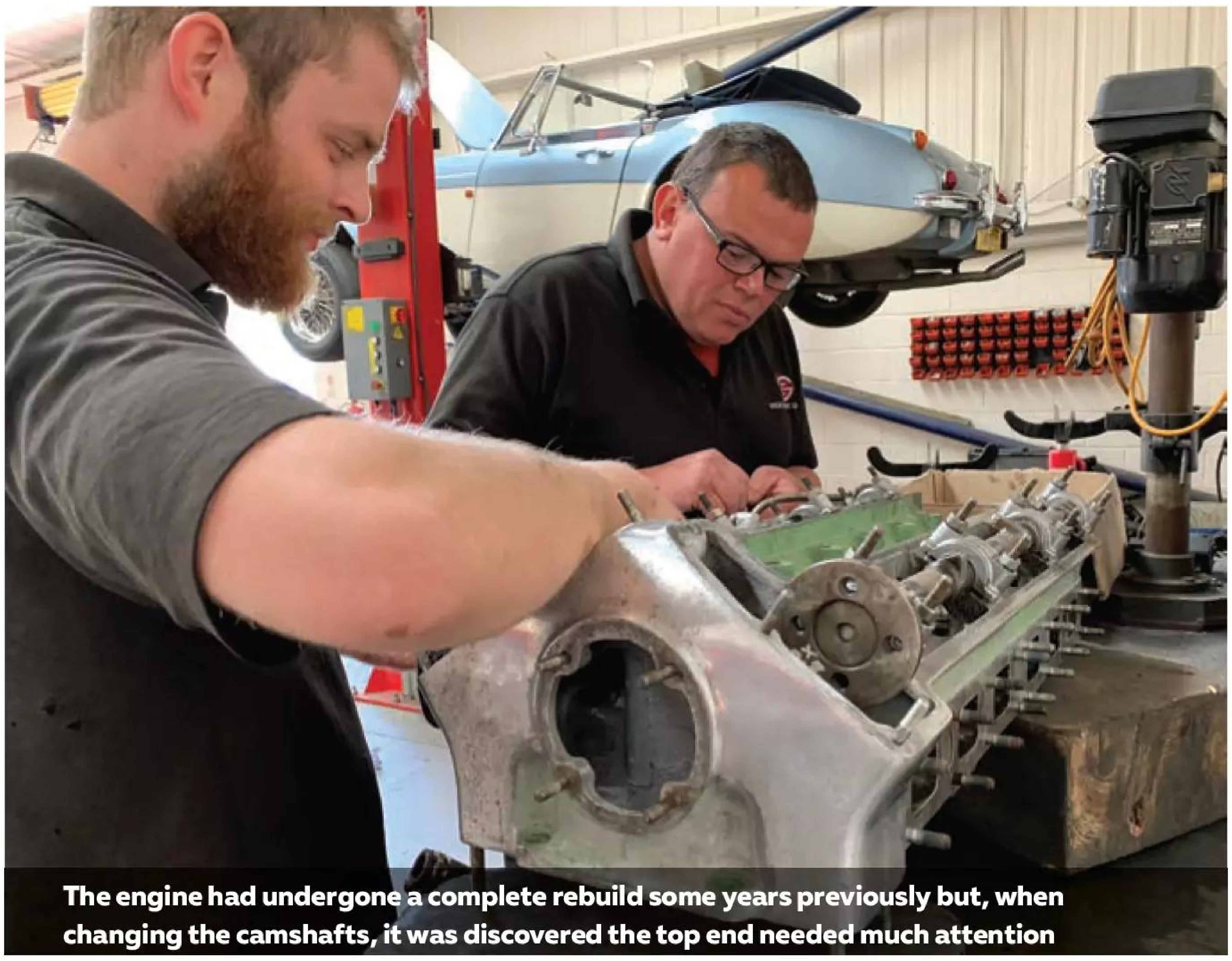
Clean and presentable but no concours queen with enhancements purely fitted for long-distance reliability their hourly rate was not astronomical, although I soon realised that very little was actually accomplished per hour. In theory the car was merely taken there to diagnose the erratic running, but they just happened to find several other issues, which helps to explain why I did not see the car again for four months.

My collection of the Mk2 coincided with spring sunshine and desperation to be on the road, so I hastily put it into service on a ten-day tour of the Scottish Highlands, attempting to realise my dream from that very first test drive. I wrote an account of this trip for *Classic Jaguar* (Dec/Jan 2018) circumventing the entire coast and covering almost two thousand miles.

Despite the four months of specialist mechanical attention the Mk2 did not run perfectly. Idling was resolutely poor, running-on remained a frequent occurrence and the car still hated being cold, leap-frogging and cutting out at junctions. Nevertheless, other than a puncture, the Mk2 soldiered on, through snow at the beginning of the tour (where it out-performed most modern cars) to unseasonal, baking heat by the end. It was a quite an experience!

I persevered for the summer and then took the car back to the specialist, prepared for another long winter in hibernation. In addition to investigating the bewildering running issues, other examinations revealed that much brake and suspension replacement was apparently required. I was also persuaded to have an alternator conversion, but with 'Murphy' already retro-fitted with power steering this turned out to be expensive and time-consuming, with the recommended alternator having to be imported from America.

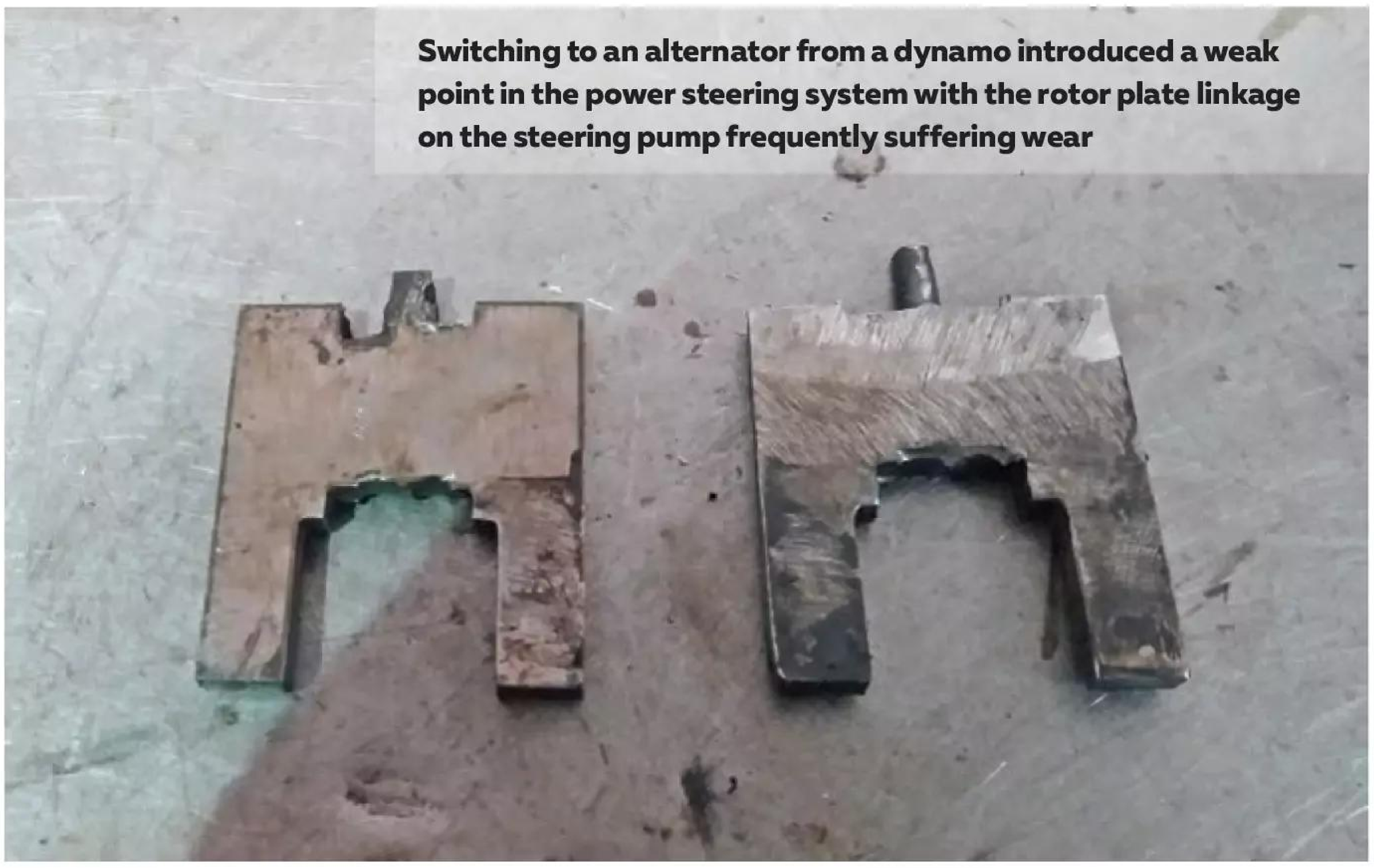
On song – After four years of strife the now sweetly-running Mk2 appears in a photoshoot for sister publication *Jaguar World*



The engine had undergone a complete rebuild some years previously but, when changing the camshafts, it was discovered the top end needed much attention

Four months passed to be concluded by yet another very hefty bill. In addition to high costs, I had lost confidence in the communication system with confusions frequently arising, such as when I was told the Torque Arm bushes needed replacement only to discover the invoice stated Panhard Rod bushes had been changed. Furthermore, the car ran no better after its second stint at the health farm and once again it was clearly imperative to move on.

With a change of tack, I took Murphy to a classic car tuning specialist to be put on the rolling road. This resulted in a livelier feel but all other faults persisted.



Switching to an alternator from a dynamo introduced a weak point in the power steering system with the rotor plate linkage on the steering pump frequently suffering wear

"The result was a sweetly running Mk2 just like I had always known it could be: smoother, more responsive, quieter and idling blissfully even when cold"

I see lots of Mk2s at shows and they all ran more smoothly than mine but so far every garage had pronounced mine to be perfectly acceptable. I was beginning to doubt my sanity until the tuning chap asked if different cams had been installed at some time and, upon delving back in the history, I found that was the case. It would appear the previous owner undertook several 'upgrades', which rather than enhancing performance just fouled things up!

Enter the next garage. I had tried a Classic Jaguar Specialist so this time I chose a dedicated Mk2 specialist but unfortunately had to wait many months before they could fit me into their busy diary. Eventually a full day's appraisal led to more tuning (disagreeing with the specialist tuner's settings) and they advised to leave the cams alone as they didn't consider the idle to be particularly irregular. Who was I to disagree - even though I did? However, I was shocked to receive a list of recommended work suggesting the replacement of virtually the entire suspension system. This included both the Torque Arm and Panhard Rod bushes, further obscuring which items had been renewed barely two thousand miles ago. They also suggested the running-on issues were due to the electric fan being incorrectly wired. It felt like Groundhog Day.

Sadly, their tinkering actually worsened the cold running issues. I informed them of this but received no response, although thankfully neither did I receive a bill for the work done.

Where to go next? Thirteen visits to five garages including two 'specialists' and we were still struggling despite the funding by umpteen thousands of my dwindling retirement funds. I continued to use Murphy on extended tours, but I yearned for that smooth running, reliable car to complement its glamour and public appeal.

By chance I attended an event with a classic car hire company which numbered several Jaguars amongst their fleet, including two Mk2s which they maintained in their own workshop. I figured that if they could keep those hard-working cars on the road when frequently driven by mechanically unsympathetic drivers, then they must have seen most things that can go wrong. So I dropped the Mk2 off with them for a couple of minor jobs - handbrake and heater fan. I was pleased with their honesty and fair price so decided to take the car back with the extensive list from the Mk2 specialist, which involved most suspension items, brakes and a leaking steering rack. I also sourced standard camshafts to replace those fitted by the previous owner. As for the all-important tuning, the ignition timing was adjusted to the settings they found their own cars happy with and the carburettors similarly tweaked (without replacement parts this time). The result was a sweetly running Mk2 just like I had always known it could be: smoother, more responsive, quieter and idling blissfully even when cold. The running-on issues also disappeared without any further fan rewiring that had been previously deemed necessary.

However, the one job not controlled by them was the steering rack, which was despatched to a specialist for repair. The leaks were cured but the steering no longer self-centred. The specialist blamed modern seals being too tight and offered to replace them. This was done but without »

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Breakdowns rarely occurred in such favourable locations!

improvement. It was then replaced with a newly rebuilt rack, and then another one, but still without success.

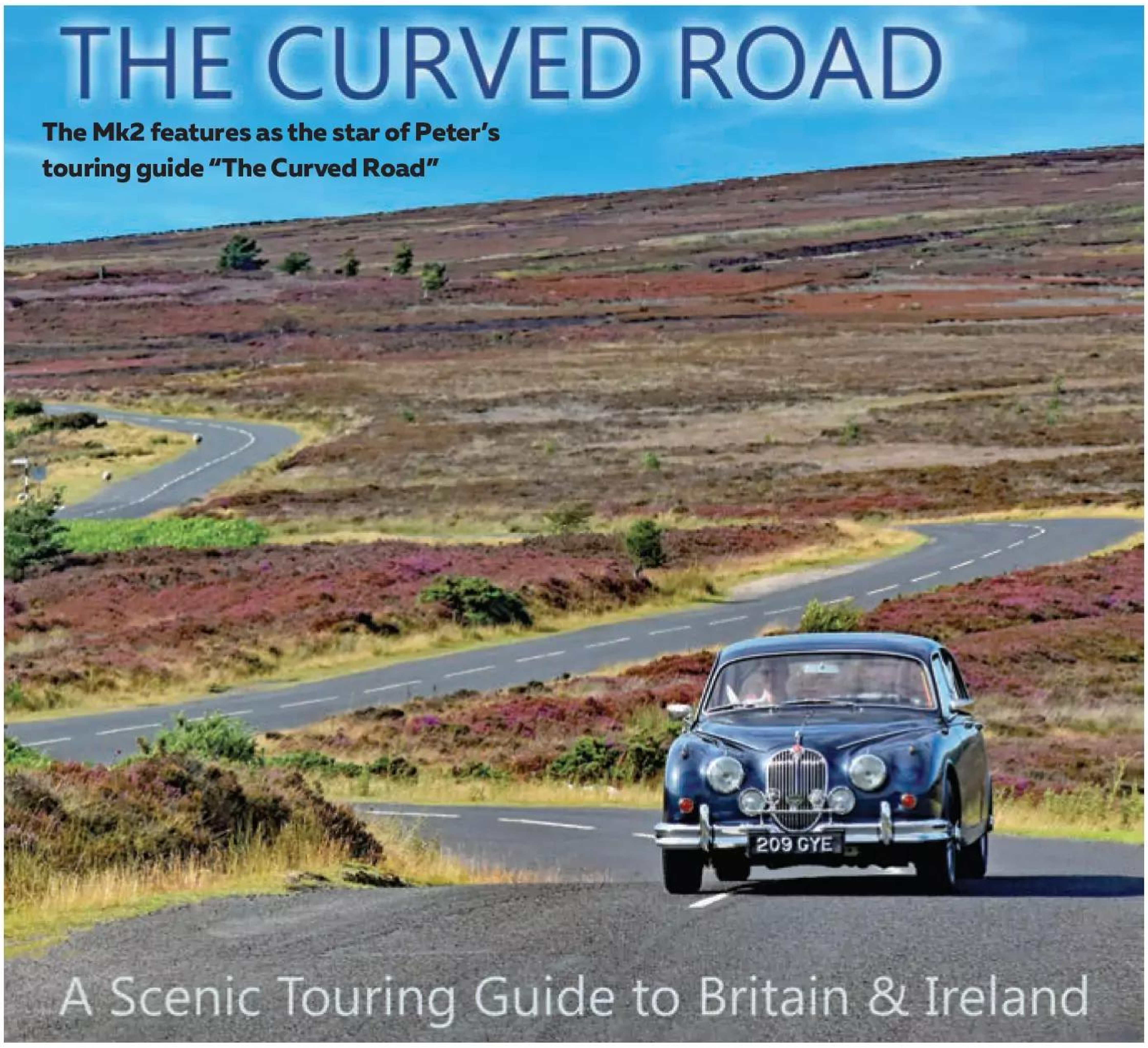
In the meantime, two breakdowns caused through power steering faults led to an entirely new system being required.

The final piece in the puzzle lay in conquering the self-centring problem. Rack conversions are not ideal for Mk2s as the steering geometry was not designed to accommodate them and to encourage a propensity for self-centring, I learnt that castor angles should be increased. This seemed like a logical solution but disappointingly in practice it made no difference at first, however, after a few thousand miles Murphy's steering slowly began to behave itself.

The car had eventually become what I hoped I had bought four years ago. It ran dependably, turned heads and the driver's seat was a glorious place to be on my scenic explorations.

For those readers who have the knowledge and abilities to carry out your own repairs you must be perplexed by these sorry tales. Even a dunce like me expected the smooth running of the Mk2's venerable XK engine to be relatively straightforward and not the rocket science that even the specialists appear to have struggled with. The most shocking revelation has been that the majority of garages were less than competent. Not only that but all appeared to disagree with the ideas of the others. I have cautiously not mentioned any names although would have happily recommended the final garage had they not gone under due to Coronavirus ramifications.

All I need to do now is find another incarnation of that garage because, with characteristic stupidity, I have rashly decided to trade in the Mk2 for an E-type. Not to worry though as I am assured this is a 'well-sorted' example. Watch this space! ■



The Mk2 features as the star of Peter's touring guide "The Curved Road"

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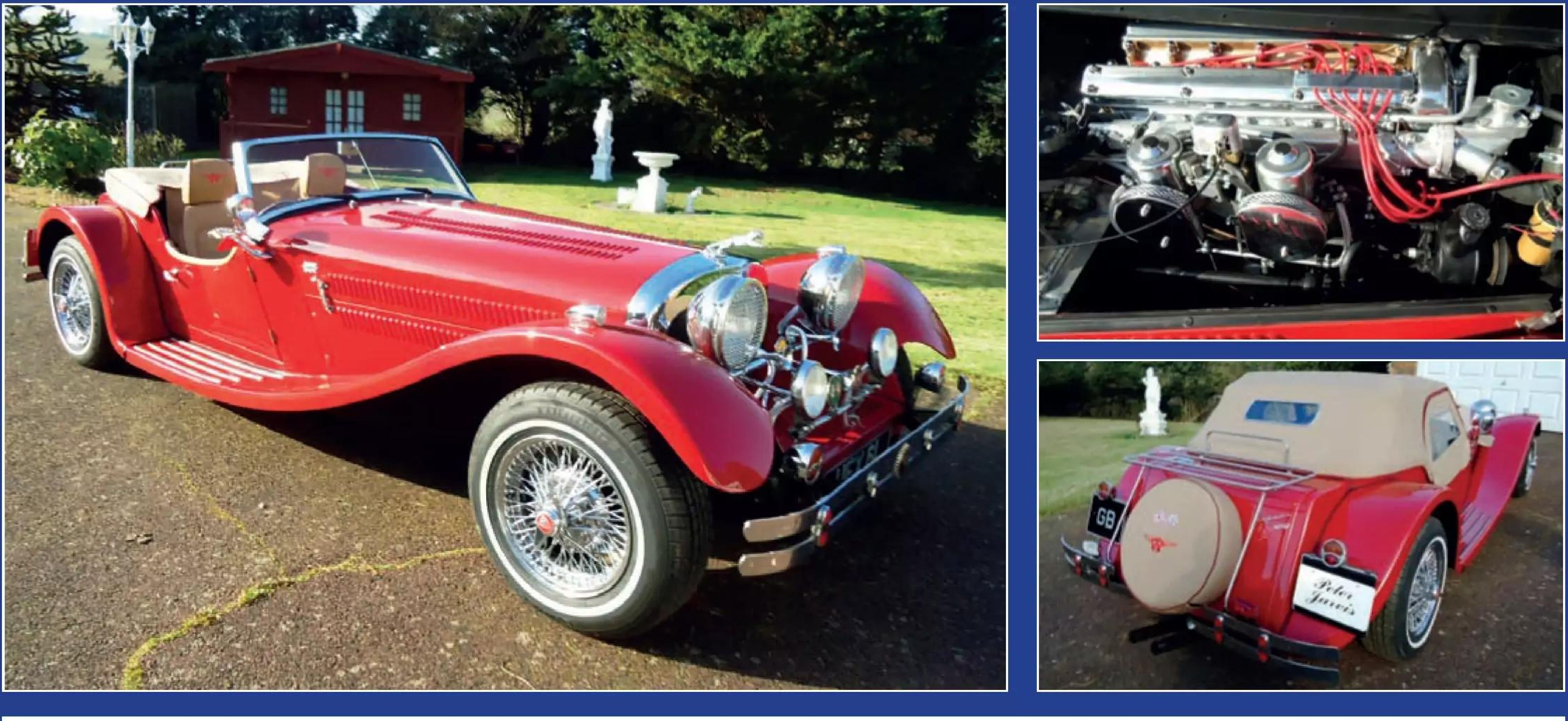

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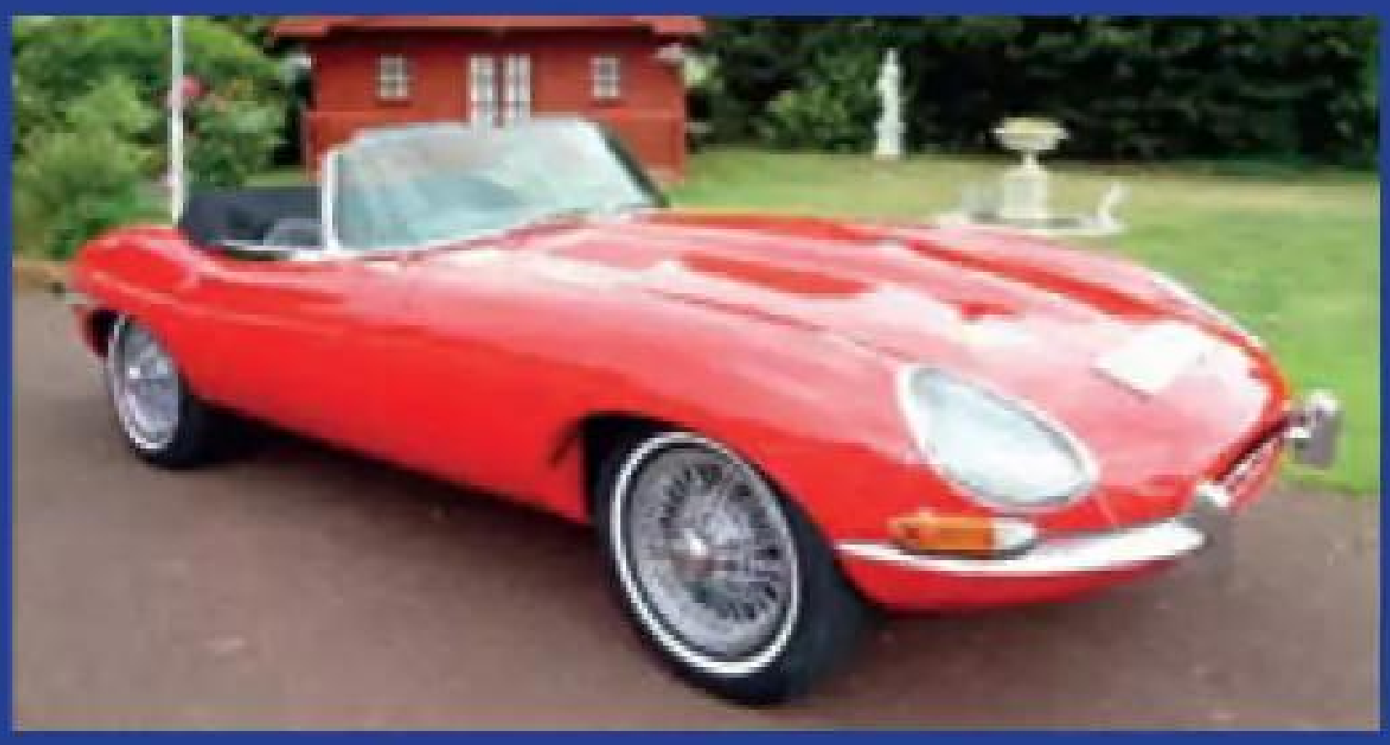

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GOLDEN GLOW

For anyone tempted by a Jaguar Mk2, what's the ideal specification to look out for? We meet the current custodian of this impressive survivor to find out why it's his ideal choice

WORDS: **PAUL GUINNESS** PHOTOGRAPHY: **MATT WOODS**

"With the Golden Sand paintwork being largely original, I was determined not to respray the whole car," explains Tim Milbank on the day of our photo shoot, as we enjoy a walkaround of his 1965 Jaguar Mk2. "So instead we lacquered it all over, preserving both the paintwork and the car's look of originality."

It was its original appearance that initially attracted us to Tim's splendid looking Mk2. Its first owner's choice of paintwork hue suits the car perfectly, as does its standard steel-wheel spec. "So many of today's Mk2s have been retro-fitted with wires, but to me the standard wheels and hubcaps look much better. It's certainly how I remember the Mk2s that I used to see on the streets in my younger days."

Tim's love of classic Jaguars – and his admiration of Sir William Lyons' many achievements – has been life-long, and he's owned and driven countless different examples over the years. It was when he sold his E-Type in 2013, however, that Tim decided to look for an original Mk2, a car that would be a more practical proposition for him and his family. "I've always been a fan of the Jaguar Mk2, ever since the days when they could still be picked up for about £500," smiles Tim. "I remember when the Mk2 was the default getaway car for London robbers and gangsters – they would be stolen to order thanks to their strong performance and good handling."

These days, of course, the Mk2 has a rather more law-abiding following, though its current fanbase still enjoys what was one of the top performers of its day. Interestingly, however, Tim didn't opt for the 3.8-litre flagship when buying his latest Mk2: "To me, the 3.4 is the pick of the range. Obviously, the 3.8 has a touch more power – it's a highly capable car, and I can understand why it has such a following. But the 3.4 engine is incredibly smooth and flexible – and at the sweet spot of around 3,000rpm, it sounds amazing. A healthy 3.4 is an effortless long-distance cruiser, with plenty of acceleration both mid-range and from standstill."

HIGH PERFORMANCE

Even when new, the power difference between the 3.4-litre Mk2 and the 3.8-litre flagship was relatively minor, with official outputs of 210bhp and 220bhp respectively. Top speed of the 3.4 was around the 120mph mark, while the 3.8 added an extra 5mph. Both cars provided thrilling performance, as well »

“Tim’s love of classic Jaguars – and his admiration of Sir William Lyons’ many achievements – has been life-long”

as long-distance agility at high speed – something that was a major selling point in that sector during the 1960s, when Britain was moving into the motorway age and the 70mph speed limit had yet to be implemented.

The specification of Tim’s 1965 Mk2 further benefits from having the all-synchromesh manual gearbox (introduced that year to replace the original Moss unit), resulting in the kind of slick gearchanges that the impressive powerplant always deserved. So how did he manage to find what for him was the ideal-spec example?

“I happened to be talking to a Mk2 owner back in 2013 and mentioned that I was in the market for one,” Tim recalls. “He said he was interested in selling his and invited me to take a look. It turned out to be my preferred choice of a 3.4 with the later all-synchro manual-overdrive ’box. It also came with a raft of history and lots of old paperwork, having had only four owners. It was too good an opportunity to miss.”

Not that Tim’s newly acquired Mk2 was in perfect condition, of course: “The paintwork was very flat looking, the interior woodwork had been painted with polyurethane and the suspension was sagging, but I knew it was a good car – solid and unmolested.” Tim was in the perfect position for improving the Mk2, as owner of Southend-based Pride & Joy Classic Cars, a company that specialises in restoring, maintaining, servicing and repairing classics of all types. There’s always been an emphasis on classic Jaguars thanks to Tim’s experience and expertise with the marque, matched by that of his co-director, Eddie – and so this unusually original Mk2 was going to be in safe hands. »

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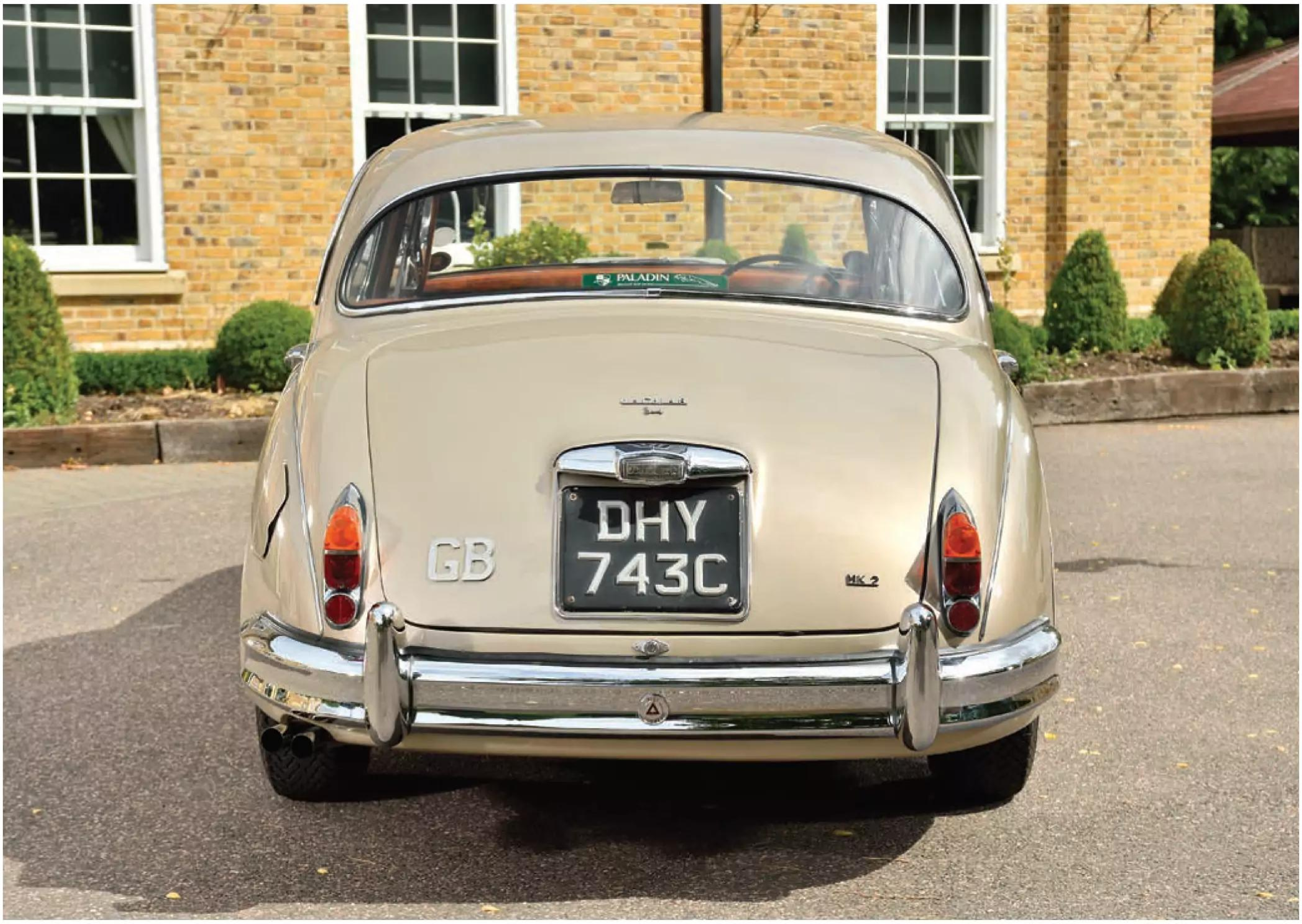
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MK 2

SOLID SURVIVOR

On further investigation, the bodywork turned out to be as solid as Tim had expected, with only some localised repairs needed to the inner rear wings: "We did respray the bonnet and front wings," explains Tim, "but the rest of the paintwork is as it left the factory, albeit now safely preserved under several coats of lacquer." The result is a Mk2 that looks fantastically well-preserved without being too 'fresh' – one that's obviously been well looked after throughout the decades rather than having just emerged from a full-scale restoration.

The same technique was adopted inside the Jaguar, where the damaged rear seat was reupholstered but the two fronts were rejuvenated and retained. The only option with the woodwork was complete restoration, and so the dashboard and door cappings were sent to an old friend who'd served his time at Rolls-Royce – and the end result is astonishing in terms of quality and attention to detail.

Although Tim was keen to retain as much of his Mk2's originality as possible, he's not afraid to make changes to improve a car's reliability or driver appeal: "A Revotec fan has been fitted, which means no overheating worries during the summer months, and we decided to fit adjustable Koni dampers at the rear. Combined with new Blockley tyres all round, this has improved the car's handling and grip no end."

The Mk2's 3.4-litre powerplant had already been professionally rebuilt when Tim bought the car, and it continues to perform strongly and reliably to this day. Over the last seven years, Tim's not been afraid to use his Jaguar on long-distance trips, mostly accompanied by his young son, one of his most memorable excursions being to the Le Mans Classic: "I just find it the perfect all-rounder, being practical as well as a great driver's car. There's plenty of room on board and the boot's big, making it ideal for holidays and weekends away. And, of course, it's a pleasure to drive, helped a lot by the all-synchro gearbox. It's a great set-up, particularly as parts are getting harder to find now for the original Moss 'box."

This highly original car still boasts the same extra-cost options that were fitted from new, including its front seatbelts, reclining seats and factory-fitted radio. And rather reassuringly, confirms Tim, everything still works: "Even the original factory-fitted timepiece is fully functioning – and that's something that usually stopped soon after purchase, even back in the day."

"The Mk2 was a real game-changer for Jaguar," concludes Tim. "And, of course, the motoring press loved it. When Bill Boddy, editor of *Motor Sport* magazine, did a 1,000-mile test in a

Mk2 3.8 in September 1960, he could find little to criticise. In fact, his report was almost a eulogy, saying that selling such a car for £1,800 was a commercial miracle understood only by Sir William Lyons. He also said that fastidious businessmen and keen motorists could save something like £3,000 by bearing this in mind, as motor cars with doubled-barrelled names were somewhat expensive compared with the Coventry-built twin-cam machine. That was praise indeed from somebody known for promoting foreign cars and for upsetting Sir William." ■

> **"Tim was in the perfect position for improving the Mk2, as owner of Pride & Joy Classic Cars"**

SALOON SUCCESS

Following on from what we now refer to as the Mk1, the new-for-1959 Jaguar Mk2 took what was already a successful model and transformed it into one of the most desirable, most exciting saloons of the '60s. The biggest visual changes were above the waistline, which saw a dramatic increase in glass area; the side windows were deeper, the windscreen was larger and the rear screen was of a wrap-around design.

Combined with a redesigned grille and new-look lights, the overall effect was quite dramatic, with the Mk2 having the appearance of a genuinely new car. Mechanically, meanwhile, there were plenty of familiar features, including continued use of 2.4- and 3.4-litre six-cylinder XK powerplants, now complemented by a range-topping 3.8-litre version. Other improvements included Dunlop disc brakes, as well as a wider track for improved handling. Early cars were offered with either a Borg Warner automatic or Moss four-speed (plus overdrive) manual transmission, though the latter was swapped for a fully-synchromesh Jaguar set-up in 1965.

The imminent arrival of the XJ6 saw the Mk2 killed off by late '67, though two re-branded versions – the Jaguar 240 and 340 – were then launched, featuring vinyl upholstery, poorer quality carpets and new-look slimline bumpers. Both models were only ever intended to be stop-gap designs, however, hence the disappearance of the 340 as early as 1968, with the Jaguar 240 ceasing production the following year.

Production figures for the Mk2 line-up make impressive reading, with the 3.8 being the most successful. Of all the Mk2s built between 1959 and '67, a healthy 30,141 were the 3.8-litre flagship, with the 2.4 and 3.4 models achieving sales of 25,173 and 28,666 respectively. The short-lived 240 and 340 models attracted a total of 7,234 buyers between them.

ALWAYS THE BRIDESMAID…

The most overlooked member of the Mk2 family offers everything enthusiasts say they want. So why is it not the most valued?

WORDS: **SAM SKELTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **PAUL WALTON AND KELSEY ARCHIVE**

The story of the Jaguar Mk2 is one that is often told by the motoring press – and let's face it, why wouldn't it be? It's a sports saloon with style, poise, performance and a great story – used by the police and criminals alike, the Mk2 is one of the few prestige cars that could have meant all things to all men. The Daimler V8 and Jaguar S-type often get honourable mentions as Mk2 alternatives – as in our twin test in this very issue, they're both seen as cars that offer the Mk2 look for a lot less money – and while they offer compromises in the form of a V8 engine and independent rear suspension, many see these as upgrades.

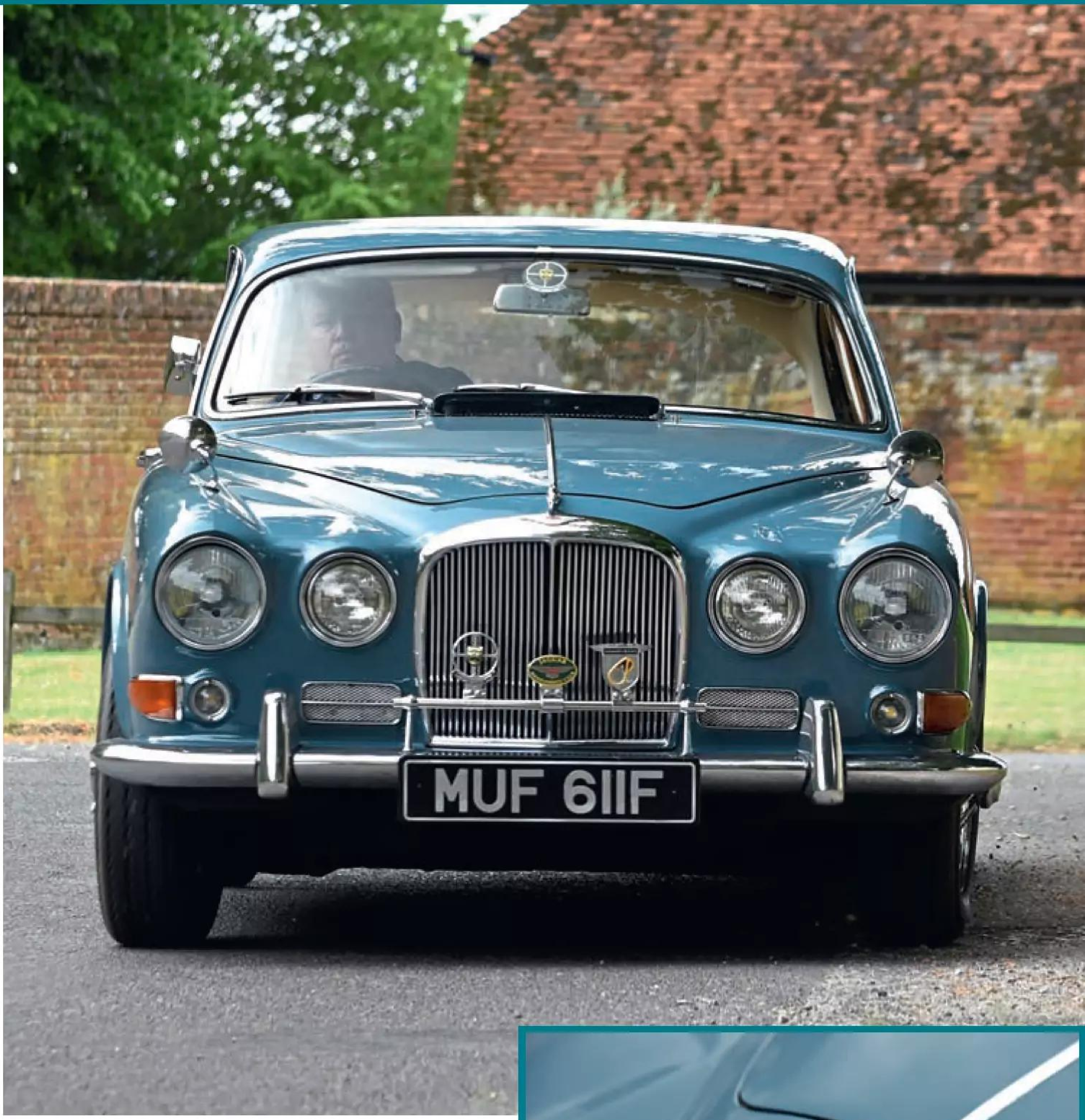
There's also, unsurprisingly, a Mk2 upgrade market – with many Mk2s having been retrofitted with the S-type's independent rear suspension, and with the 4.2 litre engine out of the larger MkX. And often when it comes to the secondhand market, these IRS equipped 4.2 litre cars, when they can be found, are the most expensive Mk2s of the lot.

It therefore seems highly unusual to us as *Jaguar World*, that there is a car that put the Mk2's compact size, the 4.2 litre engine and the independent rear suspension together in one package from the factory – almost a prototype for the subsequent XJ6, but one that had Mk2 underpinnings firmly at its heart. And yet it's a car that nobody talks about, the Cinderella Jag with values far lower than those for any Daimler V8, any plastic-trimmed 240 and any S-type 3.4. The Jaguar 420 and its stablemate the Daimler

Sovereign offer everything that people claim to want from an old Jag, but their shrunken MkX styling means that they're overlooked in favour of more expensive models with oval grilles and single headlamps.

The 420's story has its genesis in the MkX, which owing to its size wasn't selling in Britain and owing to its cost wasn't selling in America. The 4.2 litre XK engine had helped, though not by enough, and Jaguar was conscious that it needed to do something to boost sales. It was obvious what was needed – a smaller car than the MkX that offered the same level of performance and luxury. There was also the fact that many people found the S-type's styling a little uncomfortable both within and outside of the company, and working on a car to bridge the gap between it and the MkX seemed like the best way to solve both problems.

Broadly, the plan for the styling was to take the S-type and graft the MkX nose onto it. However, there were a number of key differences designed to minimise the impact of the cars' different dimensions. The front panel was less steeply raked than on the MkX, a prominent central bar on the grille, and rectangular horn grilles in place of the circular ones on the bigger car. To differentiate it from the S-type, the front wheelarches were reprofiled to be slightly squarer. New wheeltrims (shared with the new 420G) would also be fitted, with prominent badges in the centre of the wheel. Under the bonnet sat a detuned 4.2 litre engine, offering 245bhp in place of the MkX's 265bhp. This was largely down to carburation; the triple carburettor manifold wouldn't fit, so a new one was designed to utilise twin SUs instead. There was an improved radiator, and the old dynamo gave way to an alternator on a new-to-Jaguar negative earth system.



Meanwhile the engine driven fan was binned, replaced by a quieter viscous unit. Unlike the S-type, it used the same automatic gearbox as the MkX, the Borg Warner Model 8 – designed to withstand the extra torque of the 4.2 engine. Manual cars used Jaguar's own box, as with the S-type.

The 420 also became the first small Jaguar to be offered with power steering – the Bendix system from the MkX. A variable ratio system, it took much of the work out of what had previously been a hefty car to manouvre at parking speeds and was a useful way to separate the car from the rest of the small saloons at launch.

Inside, there was a new dashboard with safety padding round the edges, »

and new door cappings which also offered safety benefits for the occupants. There was a new clock, driven by the fitment of an electrically driven revcounter. In the S-type, the clock was part of the revcounter face but there was no electric equivalent available, so the clock was relegated to the dash rail.

Originally, it was planned that the 420 would be a Jaguar-only model. But once again, Stratstone came knocking. It was the dealer that had been instrumental in the creation of the Daimler V8 in 1962, creating a smaller Daimler to cater for those trading in their Conquests. But in 1965, James Smillie of Stratstone came back to Jaguar with an issue. People didn't want to trade in their V8s for the same again, they wanted something to trade up to – and there was nothing to offer except the Majestic Major. Could Jaguar, Smillie asked, offer an intermediate Daimler? The solution was to badge engineer the

LUCAS
AMPS
FUEL
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CIGAR
STARTER

420 – Stratstone suggested the name Sovereign, as Jaguar was planning to call the car the Daimler Royale. The changes were minimal – a Daimler grille, Daimler hubcaps, perforated leather seat inserts, nicer sun visors, and all the options as standard. On manuals – the first Daimler manual to be offered since the 1930s – overdrive was standard, and all Sovereigns came with power steering.

Launched in October 1966, the 420 had been in production since August to ensure dealers had adequate stocks. And it was a sales success, averaging the same number of annual sales as the 3.4 and 3.8 S-types had previously achieved combined and eclipsing all figures for the MkX. At the same time as the 420 was launched, the MkX received a facelift – chrome side trims, new hubcaps and a 420-aping grille combined to create the new 420G, a car intended to add prestige to the image of the smaller model by making it appear closer to the flagship.

Not content with producing them at Browns Lane, the 420 was also built overseas. Indeed, the blue car pictured here was one of approximately 840 produced in completely-knocked-down (CKD) form in South Africa. Jaguar Cars South Africa Ltd assembled its cars locally, with minor detail differences including the headlining, the type of wood used for the dashboard, and the finish of the leather on the seats. For tax reasons, 30% of the car's content had to be sourced locally, and it was inevitable that the trim would form the main component of this. Jaguar had assembled Mk2s in South Africa since 1960 as part of a system of tax incentives from the South African government, but it had brought its operation in house by 1966 and owned the company assembling its own cars. Production lasted to 1969 – a year after the last UK 420 had been built – and it »

became the last CKD Jaguar until the XF was built in India in 2013 for local markets. The last batch of 420s built had all been shipped out in CKD form.

Following the creation of the Jaguar FT prototype for Italian distributor Tarchini SVAJ by Bertone, a further 12 rolling chassis were ordered in 1966. Unlike the prototype which was S-type based, the subsequent 12 chassis were supplied to 420 specification, and the second Bertone FT to be built had one of these 420 chassis. However, what happened to the remaining chassis is a mystery to this day – with most enthusiasts concluding that they were never assembled and were eventually scrapped.

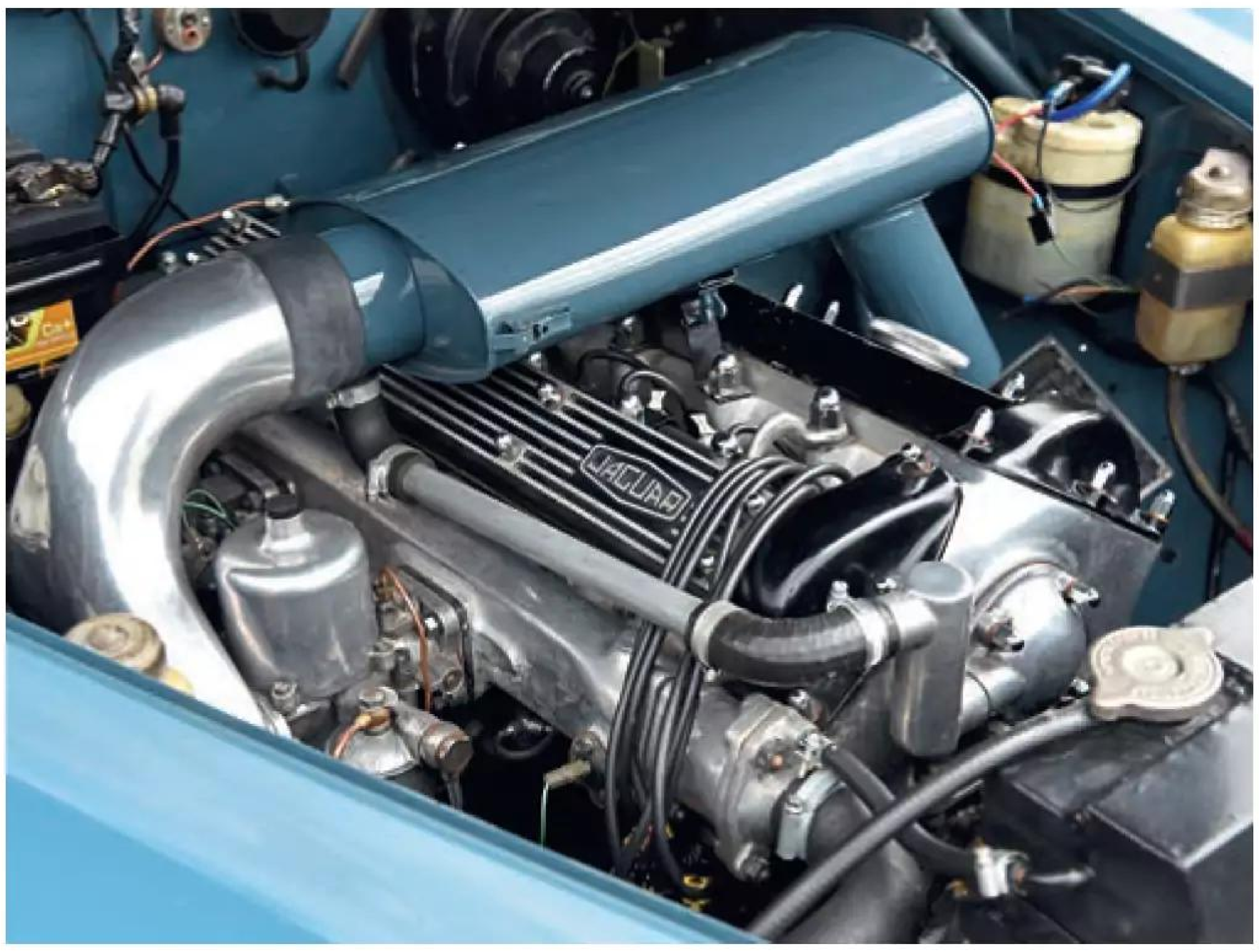
3.4 S-types sold around 2,000 per year, 3.8s a further 3,000 – the 420 would average 5,000 per year, with a further 2,000 Daimler Sovereigns on top. This made the 420 Jaguar's biggest seller from 1966 – S-type sales dropped to a relative trickle, the smaller saloons were starting to slow up, and the 420G was barely making an impact on the numbers. But Jaguar had another ace up its sleeve – it was aware of the complications of its range and planned to rationalise the whole lot down into one model family. The XJ of 1968 was that car – and it could be argued that by melding a sensible size, 4.2 litre engine and independent rear suspension the 420 had cast itself in the mould of a prototype XJ6. It proved that this was the sort of car that the punters wanted, and that Jaguar was on the right path.

So how does it drive? Unsurprisingly, the 420 feels much like the S-type upon which it's based, but there's more power there, enough to counter the weight difference and make the car feel very nearly the equal of the Mk2 3.8 in a straight line. But unlike the smaller car, the 420 is able to carry that speed through the corners. The power steering is a boon when driving it hard, it's a little lighter than we'd like but it means that you're not hauling it round bends and giving yourself a workout in the process. And when you stop and settle down, it's a relaxing saloon. There is, unsurprisingly, more than a hint of the XJ6 about the way it drives, but it doesn't feel quite as modern as the XJ6 does – it still had the feel of a Mk2 to it.

Here's the thing, though. While we were writing this feature we had a look at the classifieds. The outstanding South African car in our photographs was for sale at £16,500, there was a Daimler Sovereign for £8,950, and another very presentable one for £10,995. Daimler V8s seem to sit in the high teens in comparable order, S-types are in the twenties, and you can pay north of fifty for the nicest Mk2 3.8s these days. If you're lucky enough to find a restomod Mk2 with a 4.2 litre engine, it's going to be at least the same sort of money as an S-type even if it's based on the relatively undesirable 240. So you're paying twice as much as you could for a 420, and you're losing the independent rear end.

The 420 might not look like a Mk2, with its elongated tail and its quad headlamps. And ultimately, that's why it's not the car that the market wants – they want to be seen driving Inspector Morse's car, and they don't care if it's got a sister model with improved driver dynamics. But if you're not bothered about the way it looks, the 420 is undoubtedly the best value of the entire Mk2 family. Because it's been overlooked, the odds are that cars that have survived this long have been loved, rather than patched up to keep them going, making the odds of finding a good one at a price you can afford higher still in comparison. And as the Mk2 turns 65, interest in the entire small saloon range has risen and prices for the more desirable models are likely to solidify further. Perhaps it's time once again to consider these cars the way they were seen in the 1960s – a Mk2 evolution, rather than second best. ■

> **"The 420 is undoubtedly the best value of the entire Mk2 family"**



IRONING OUT THE CRINKLES

The Daimler V8 and Daimler Sovereign represent the transition of Britain's oldest motor manufacturer to an upmarket subsidiary of Jaguar. But did either retain its own Daimler identity in the process?

WORDS: **SAM SKELTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **PAUL WALTON**

> **“You see, the engine from the SP250 would fit very nicely into the Jaguar Mk2 shell”**

It says a lot about the level of strategic thinking that went into Jaguar’s purchase of the Daimler Motor Company from Birmingham Small Arms Company, that most of Jaguar’s board members heard the news on the radio. The 1960 purchase had been driven by Sir William Lyons’s plans for expansion – with Daimler’s Radford works offering much more space for the production of Jaguar cars and components. And Daimler wasn’t utilising the space fully. At the time of the takeover it had just two model ranges – the slow selling, somewhat gawky SP250 sports car, launched the previous year, and the Majestic Major saloon, which sat above even the MkIX Jaguar at the very top of the luxury tree. Plans within Daimler to adapt the Vauxhall Cresta to create a new small saloon – the DN250, intended as a Conquest successor – had come to nought.

After the purchase in 1960, Jaguar issued a press release which stated *“Jaguar Cars Ltd wish to deny unfounded rumours to the effect that sweeping changes, including even the extinction of the Daimler marque, are to be expected. The Company’s long view envisages not merely the retention of the Daimler marque, but the expansion of its markets at home and overseas.”*

Initially, Jaguar saw little need to meddle – there was no real crossover; the SP250 was a different type of sportscar to the imminent E-type, and the Majestic Major wasn’t worrying Jaguar sales. Barring the introduction of an extended DR450 limousine in 1961, it was happy to leave Daimler as it was and promised that the marque wouldn’t be neglected as part of Jaguar. There would be space to continue building Daimlers at Browns Lane, allowing Jaguar to move all ancillary work such as engine production to the former Daimler factory.

But as well as the factory, Jaguar had inherited Daimler’s distribution network. And its oldest dealer, Stratstone of Mayfair, wasn’t happy. Simply put, the revenue from the SP250 and the Majestic Major wasn’t enough to keep the firm going, and it had taken to marketing Volkswagens in order to keep the money coming in. It approached Jaguar with a proposition; create a new small Daimler for former Conquest owners, and it would give up on Volkswagen to focus exclusively upon Jaguar and Daimler models. Stratstone had held a Daimler franchise since its formation in 1921 when it was founded by former Daimler employees – Jaguar saw the sense in acquiescence, especially as it had all the necessary parts in the parts bin.

You see, the engine from the SP250 would fit very nicely into the Jaguar Mk2 shell, and Borg-Warner had been trying to interest Jaguar in its new automatic transmission. Marry the three and you’d get a very pleasant small saloon with a very different character to that of the original Jaguar – and a different image. Bank managers and retired Majors would never look at a car as flash as a Jaguar, while spivs and wide-boys would think Daimlers too fuddy-duddy. By utilising both brands, Jaguar could enjoy both markets. The Daimler 2.5 V8 was launched on 8 October 1962, and could be identified by its new hubcaps, fluted grille, fluted rear plinth, and flatter, wider front seats. It also had a black crackle finish to the dash centre, and lost the Jag’s picnic tables in an attempt to improve space in the back. Priced above the Jaguar 3.8 at launch, the different character of the car ensured no internal competition.

For 1967, Jaguar cut costs acrss the board to reflect the fact that the Mk2 and Daimler V8 had been shunted down the market to make room for the S-type and 420. Unlike the equivalent Jaguars, the newy revised Daimler kept its leather seats and fog lamps – and even gained a new padded dash top and door cappings in place of the earlier walnut. It also gained reclining front seats and a heated rear window – making the later V8-250 with its slimline bumpers an upgrade on the earlier 2.5 V8 unlike the Jaguars it was offered alongside. Under the bonnet, it also got negative earth electrics, an alternator and twin air cleaners, making for a much more modern setup. It was in this form that the model would continue until production ended in 1969 – to be replaced by the larger, heavier, slower and much more expensive XJ6-based Daimler Sovereign 2.8.

Jaguar had not been slow to develop the Mk2, and this would lead to the next stage of Daimler’s integration. The 1963 S-type had been the result of plans to develop the Mk2 into a Mk3 – but with sales of the older car still strong, Jaguar repositioned its new »

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model between that car and the larger MkX. Its independent rear suspension added weight, as did its redesigned, more spacious shell – but that same suspension meant that what was lost in the straights was made up in the bends. For 1966 Jaguar introduced another interim model – the 420, which was intended not only as a flagship S-type with a new nose, but as a smaller alternative for those who had found the MkX too large to contemplate with its Detroit dimensions. And it was this car that would become the next new Daimler. In about October 1965, James Smillie of Stratstone protested that Daimler buyers were starting to look elsewhere – people weren't trading in their V8s for new equivalents, and short of the Majestic Major Stratstone had nothing to trade the up into. Sir William's response was to create a badge-engineered version of the new 420, and both Smillie and Stratstone MD John Olly were invited to Browns Lane to view the prototype and offer naming suggestions. Olly suggested Daimler Royale, Smillie suggested Daimler Sovereign, and while Lyons initially favoured the Royale, by the car's launch in October 1966 the Sovereign name had been chosen. Differences from the Jaguar were rather smaller than they had been with the V8. The Sovereign, effectively, was a Jaguar 420 with a big yes scribbled across the options list. That meant standard power steering, standard overdrive on manual models, a heated rear window, and Daimler-specific touches such as perforated seat inserts and nicer sun visors. It got its own fluted grille, but at the back the number plate plinth wasn't fluted – it simply had a black plastic insert which read "Daimler" glued over the cast-in Jaguar branding. Under the bonnet, the Sovereign kept the Jaguar's 4.2 litre engine, meaning that while the car was targeting a very different clientele it could no longer claim to have its own identity and feel. Alongside the V8-250, it would last to 1969 – its replacement, the XJ6-based Sovereign 4.2, was a more fitting successor than that of its smaller stablemate.

Jaguar had promised Daimler customers and the press that it would not neglect Jaguar, and yet over the course of a single decade it managed to shift Daimler from a manufacturer of its own automobiles to a brand name to stick onto fully specified Jaguars – a position it kept until its demise in 2009 on the Jaguar X350-based Daimler Super Eight. The last model solely to be sold as a Daimler – the DS420 limousine – used Jaguar parts throughout and was coachbuilt by Vanden Plas.

But in the V8 and the Sovereign, did Jaguar actually destroy what was left of the old Daimler marque or should these models be viewed simply as a shift into a new age – one which didn't compromise Daimler's brand values? And ultimately,

which model better speaks for Daimler's past? There's only one way to find out.

Let's not beat around the bush here. Because with both cars, it is only in the details that these cars are not identical to their Jaguar siblings. Let's look at the V8 first – which to all intents and purposes looks like a Jaguar 240. It shares the rounded rear end, the bulbous roof and the ovoid design motifs such as the grille and window shape. You could spend months searching in vain for an arrow straight line on this car. But those details do help to give it a different feel to the Jag. The crinkling of the radiator grille is a vestige of fins added to the earliest Daimlers to increase the surface area of the radiator and improve cooling – a design motif carried over to the number plate plinth at the rear of the car too. The leaping cat has gone, in favour of a slightly gothic angled-D motif. The hubcaps bear inset D badges instead of cat's head logos. Take these elements away and you could conceivably be looking at a Jaguar.

It's much the same story with the Daimler Sovereign – which would share the V8-250's hubcap design were our test car fitted with steel wheels. The spinners feature a cast D though. The bonnet shares its D-emblem with the smaller car, and like the V8 there's a new ribbed grille up front with a much more prominent surround that on the Jaguar. The basic shell of the 420 and Daimler Sovereign was lifted from the S-type, which means it has a flatter roof and longer rear wings under which lies Jaguar's famed independent rear suspension. At the back, though, cost cutting becomes more visible – there's no ribbing to the rear plinth. Where the Jaguar 420's plinth has the word Jaguar cast into it, there is instead a small plastic badge fitted over the moulding with the word Daimler printed in gold. There's a hint of ribbing in the reversing lights, but these are shared with the 420. What makes it easier to tell from a distance is the badging – the Jaguar, like the S-type, has its badging in the centre of the bootlid above the plinth. The Sovereign is badged where the Mk2 is, at the bottom right of the panel.

Inside, the V8-250 is noticeably different to its Jaguar stablemate in two key ways. Firstly, the seats – wider and flatter – are real leather, »

Daimler
SOVEREIGN

where in a 240 they would be Ambla. Secondly, the dash top is trimmed in black vinyl where the Jaguar is veneered. Neither of these differences were obvious when the 2.5 V8 was launched in 1962 with big bumpers – it had a fully veneered dash and while its seats were still wider and flatter, the Jaguar's sportier arrangement also featured leather trim. But both go some way toward giving this car a different interior feel to its sister car.

No such joy on the Sovereign – which marks itself as different by the use of slightly nicer veneers and perforated centre sections to seats of an identical design. These cars are almost sixty years old now, and very few will have retained their original wood in good condition – aftermarket wood kits are sold as the same for both cars, which leaves only perforated leather and the steering wheel badge as indicators that you're in a Daimler rather than a Jaguar. The dash is more modern though, with a fully padded surround. The Sovereign has a nicer interior, in our view, but it's a less separate machine when assessed on its static qualities than the V8. Will we think the same when we take to the road?

The V8 is a surprising machine, as we've said before in these pages. And it's all to do with that engine. 140bhp isn't, frankly, enough for this car to move with any great turn of speed; remember a 2.4 Mk2 is barely behind it and even the 3.4 can boast 210. And an auto box only blunts that further. But it's not necessarily about the result, it's about the way it feels. And that delicious little V8 sings. It'll rev all the way to 6000 if you want it to, and while you do have to prod it harder than you'd necessarily always want to before an upshift, the soundtrack means it's no real hardship. It's a much more willing and almost urgent sounding engine than the XK, which translates into a greater impression of power and speed than it actually gives. The ride is softer than a Mk2 – the lighter engine means softer front springing – but especially in this company the live axle at the back rather lets the side down. It's a shade bouncier than you might want – though we do have to remember that this was par for the course for the car's 1962 launch.

The following year though, Jaguar would launch the S-type, which would change the game again. And it's that car's independent rear end that sits underneath the Sovereign. The ride in the newer car is noticeably smoother and more refined, and it does feel like a generation apart. From behind the wheel there's very little of the older car's feel – a different view over the bonnet, a different dash, and a very different feel. Here, I could be in a Jaguar – the XK engine is a very distinctive unit, and I'm not sure that it helped the »

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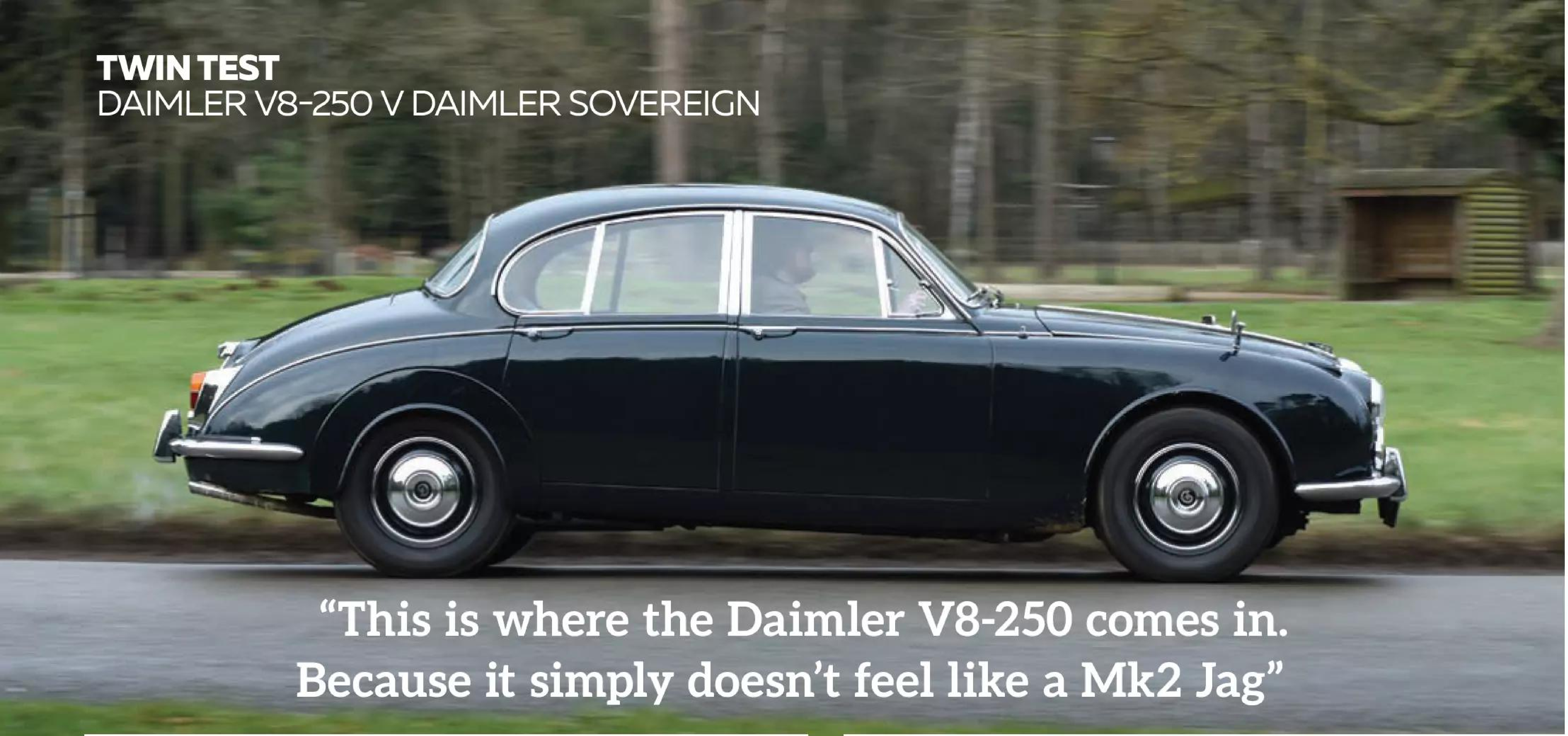


> “This is where the Daimler V8-250 comes in. Because it simply doesn’t feel like a Mk2 Jag”

Sovereign to feel like a Daimler. It’s undoubtedly faster than the V8-250 – not surprising when you consider that it has a full 105bhp more upon which to draw – but the extra refinement and less involving engine note (When was the last time anyone said THAT about an XK?) mean that it feels like the more sedate machine of the two. From behind the wheel it’s hard to see what the extra 10% over the cost of a 420 got you for your money – and let’s not forget that by 1969 this car still cost more than the new XJ6 4.2. For that, I’d want to feel I was in something separate.

CONCLUSION

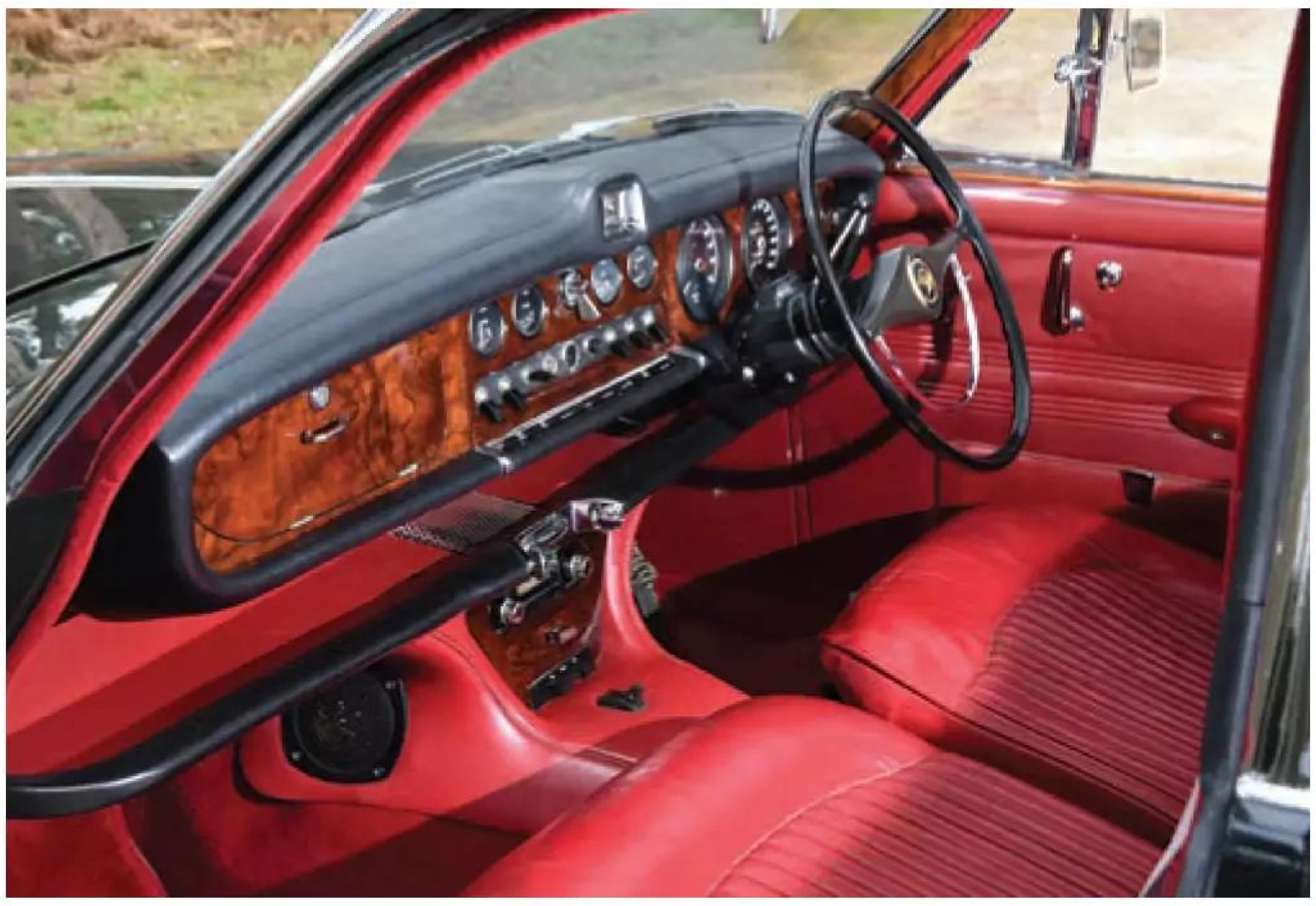
It’s 65 years since Jaguar bought Daimler – and 16 since the last Daimler, the Super Eight, left production. After the Sovereign, Jaguar repeated the formula of effectively rebadging and speccing up top-line Jaguars, with the only truly unique drivetrain in any subsequent Daimler the Super V8 of 1998-2003. This car melded XJR running gear with softer suspension and a longer shell to create a driving experience that simply wasn’t available with a Jaguar badge. Even this combination would have a Jaguar equivalent in the subsequent X350. If we return to the press release we mentioned in the introduction to this feature, *“Jaguar Cars Ltd wish to deny unfounded rumours to the effect that sweeping changes, including even the extinction of the Daimler marque, are to be expected.”* It feels sad given this intention, that only one Daimler model was ever allowed its own character under the new ownership.

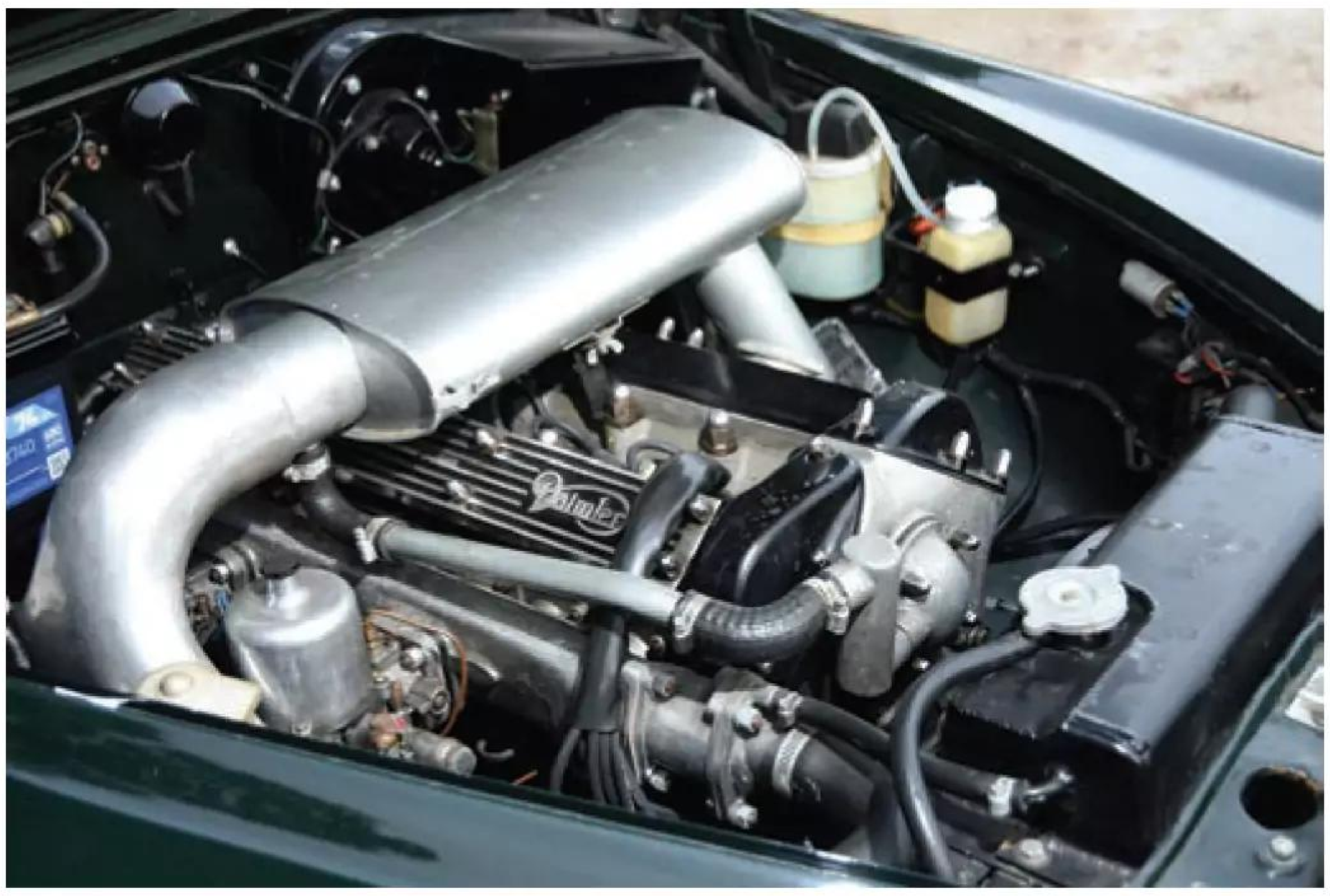
Don’t get me wrong here, the 420 is an excellent car and the Sovereign certainly doesn’t feel substandard. But with just forty quid between it and a 420G when new, if Daimler was to retain

SPECIFICATION

1968 **DAIMLER V8-250**

ENGINE: 2,548cc V8
POWER: 140bhp
TORQUE: 155lb ft
0-60mph: 13.8secs
TOP SPEED: 113mph
ECONOMY: 18mpg
TRANSMISSION: 3-spd auto
PRICE NEW (1968): £1,827





a separate identity to justify its price it needed to show it. And while standard power steering and other trinkets were nice, the fact remains that if you wanted to spec up a Jaguar 420 it would cost you less money and feel exactly the same. I have bemoaned Jaguar's attitude toward the Turner V8 in these pages before – how it would have transformed the DS420 had Jaguar not been smarting over its tests in a MkX. And I feel the same about the Daimler Sovereign. Fitment of an existing engine would have lent this car a totally separate personality to that of the equivalent Jaguar in my opinion – and if any of our readers have ever executed this conversion please get in touch as I would love to find out if I'm right.

This is where the Daimler V8-250 comes in. Because it simply doesn't feel like a Mk2 Jag. It is softer, more genteel, it feels like a product focused upon a different audience rather than a marketing exercise, and that is why – despite the Sovereign being the better car of the two – I'm going to make the V8 the victor. I happen to know that our Editor-at-Large Paul Walton, who took the photographs on these pages, disagrees with me. He thinks the V8 is too slow to be truly enjoyable, and that the IRS in the Sovereign makes it feel like a much more modern and composed machine. He's absolutely right – but what it gained in technical competence, I feel it lost in soul. ■

THANKS TO: Kim Cairns Classic Cars for supplying both cars.

SPECIFICATION

1968 **DAIMLER SOVEREIGN**

ENGINE: 4,235cc I6

POWER: 245bhp

TORQUE: 283lb ft

0-60mph: 9.9secs

TOP SPEED: 123mph

ECONOMY: 16mpg

TRANSMISSION: 3-spd auto

PRICE NEW (1968): £2,365

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123

FINAL FLOURISH

We take a trip to Essex to meet the proud owner of this handsome Jaguar 240 – the company's most affordable saloon for a brief period in the late 1960s

WORDS: **PAUL GUINNESS** PHOTOGRAPHY: **MATT RICHARDSON**

For perhaps the majority Jaguar aficionados, the 1967-on 240 saloon isn't exactly the most desirable member of the Mk2-derived family. Launched as a stop-gap model, the entry-level 240 wasn't exactly a trendsetter, arriving eight years after the debut of the original Mk2. And with it employing the smallest version of the XK engine, as well as suffering various downgrades in terms of finish and equipment, it was hardly likely to be voted the most desirable Jaguar of the '68 model year. As far as the owner of the example featured here is concerned, however, the 240 remains a desirable choice – and his particular car remains a joy to own, six years after Don White first saw it advertised.

It's worth reminding ourselves about Jaguar's reasoning behind the launch of the 240 and its larger-engined sibling, the 3.4-litre 340. By early 1967, the company's saloon range had become complex, comprising the Mk2 (in 2.4-, 3.4- and 3.8-litre guises), the S-Type and its flat-fronted 420 derivative, plus the gargantuan MkX-derived 420G. There were also Daimler versions of the Mk2 and 420 (wearing 2½ Litre and Sovereign badges respectively) to add further to the complexity.

With the exciting new XJ6 not set to debut until late 1968, management began a process of rationalisation that would see the number of saloons reduced and their respective badging simplified, as author James Taylor explained in his 1995 title (published by Crowood Press), *Jaguar Mk1 & Mk2*: "With the elimination of the 3.8-litre Mk2 and some price adjustments, the company removed the overlap between the top end of the old Mk2 range and the bottom end of the S-Type range. And following the process that had already begun with the final Mk2s, Browns Lane trimmed the specification of the remaining 2.4-litre and 3.4-litre compacts in order to keep manufacturing costs within bounds and permit the keen pricing on which the company had always depended."

That final paragraph is particularly important, as critics of the 240 will often highlight Jaguar's apparent policy of 'cheapening' the car, specifically the standard fitment of Ambla upholstery instead of leather. The truth, however, is that Ambla became standard fitment on the last of the Mk2s rather than via the launch of the 240. And, of course, anybody buying a 240 who specifically wanted hide-covered »

seats simply had to pay Jaguar a little extra for the privilege. Sadly though, picnic tables in the backs of the front seats were no longer available (the 240 didn't even offer them as options), and the car's carpeting was now made from nylon rather than wool.

Externally, the most obvious difference between the old Mk2 and the 240/340 was the use of slimline bumpers, helping to give the latest derivatives a lighter and arguably more attractive look. The entry-level 240 had another advantage, however, this time under the bonnet, where a revised version of Jaguar's 2.4-litre XK unit saw an increase in power from 120bhp to 133bhp, as well as some useful extra torque (146lb. ft. at 3700rpm). This was achieved via use of a straight-port cylinder head (similar to that used in the 4.2-litre E-Type) in place of the Mk2's old B-type head, plus twin SU HS6 carburettors (rather than the previous Solex units) and a dual-pipe exhaust system.

The end result was an entry-level Jaguar that could exceed 100mph, with much improved acceleration along the way. Three different gearbox options were available, comprising manual, manual-overdrive and automatic; and while the old 2.4-litre Mk2 had never been popular as an auto, Jaguar expected greater success this time round thanks to the latest car's extra power.

Although announced as a new model (alongside the 340) in September 1967, it was obvious that the 240 was derived from the ageing Mk2 and could have been seen as rather 'old hat' by some potential buyers. But Jaguar had a trick up its sleeve, launching the 240 with highly competitive pricing that pitched it against models from an array of less prestigious marques. The cheapest (manual) version of the 240 was available for just £1,365 at the time of its debut, making it a mere £8 dearer than the Rover 2000. And while the Solihull car had the advantage in terms of freshness and trendiness, its Coventry-built rival offered the extra allure of being a Jaguar, with all the prestige this implied.

CURRENT OWNER

The value for money offered by the 240 is still relevant to this day, with excellent examples usually being available for significantly less than you'd pay for a larger-engined version of the original Mk2. It was certainly a factor in Don White's choice of the 1968 car featured here, acquired by him six years ago after initially going on the hunt for a Mk2: "I looked at a number of Mk2s – and 3.8s in particular – but so many of them weren't in great condition and too expensive for what they were. Then I saw this 240 advertised in a classic car magazine, being sold by someone in London who was moving to Spain."

As a retired engineer, 78-year-old Don knows his way around cars and could tell that the 240 in question was an excellent example of its type. The fact that it came with a bulging history file was another major plus point: "It had been very well looked after over the years," explains Don, "and its full history was well documented. The car's first owner kept it for nine years, covering about 35,000 miles during that time. But the second owner ended up keeping it for thirty years, carrying out lots of »

VISURGIS
240

MK2 EVOLUTION

Following on from what we now refer to as the Mk1, the new-for-1959 Jaguar Mk2 took what was already a successful model and transformed it into one of the most desirable, most exciting saloons of the 1960s. The biggest visual changes were above the waistline, which saw a dramatic increase in glass area; the side windows were deeper, the windscreen was larger and the rear screen was of a wrap-around design.

Combined with a redesigned grille and new-look lights, the overall effect was quite dramatic, with the Mk2 having the appearance of a genuinely new car. Mechanically, meanwhile, there were plenty of familiar features, including continued use of 2.4- and 3.4-litre six-cylinder XK powerplants, now complemented by a range-topping 3.8-litre version. Other improvements included Dunlop disc brakes, as well as a wider track for improved handling. Early cars were offered with either a Borg Warner automatic or Moss four-speed (plus overdrive) manual transmission, though the latter was swapped for a fully-synchromesh Jaguar set-up in 1965.

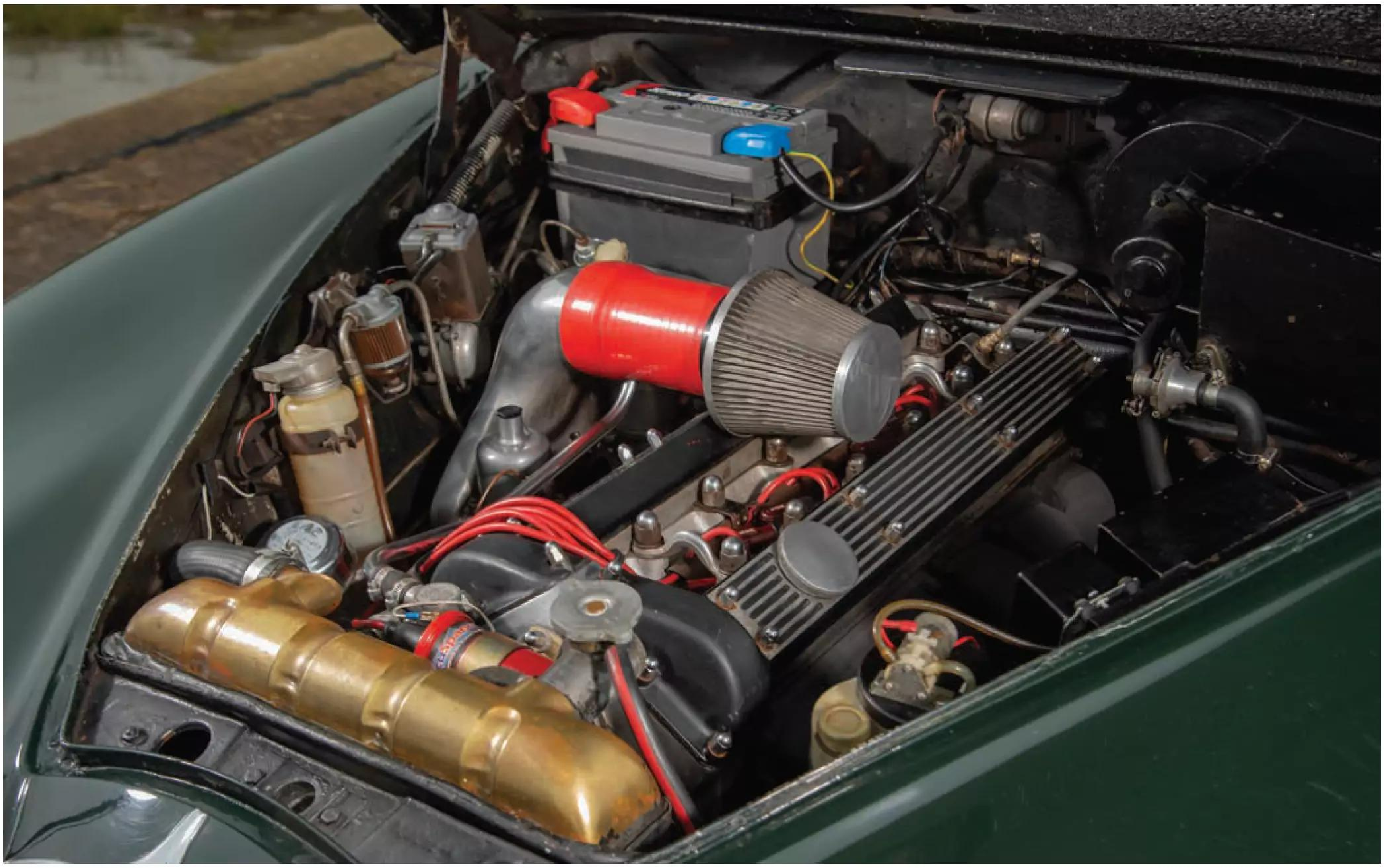
The imminent arrival of the XJ6 saw the Mk2 killed off by late '67, when the two re-branded versions – the Jaguar 240 and 340 – were launched, featuring vinyl upholstery, nylon carpets and new-look slimline bumpers. Both models were only ever intended to be stop-gap designs, however, hence the disappearance of the 340 as early as 1968, with the Jaguar 240 ceasing production in April of the following year.

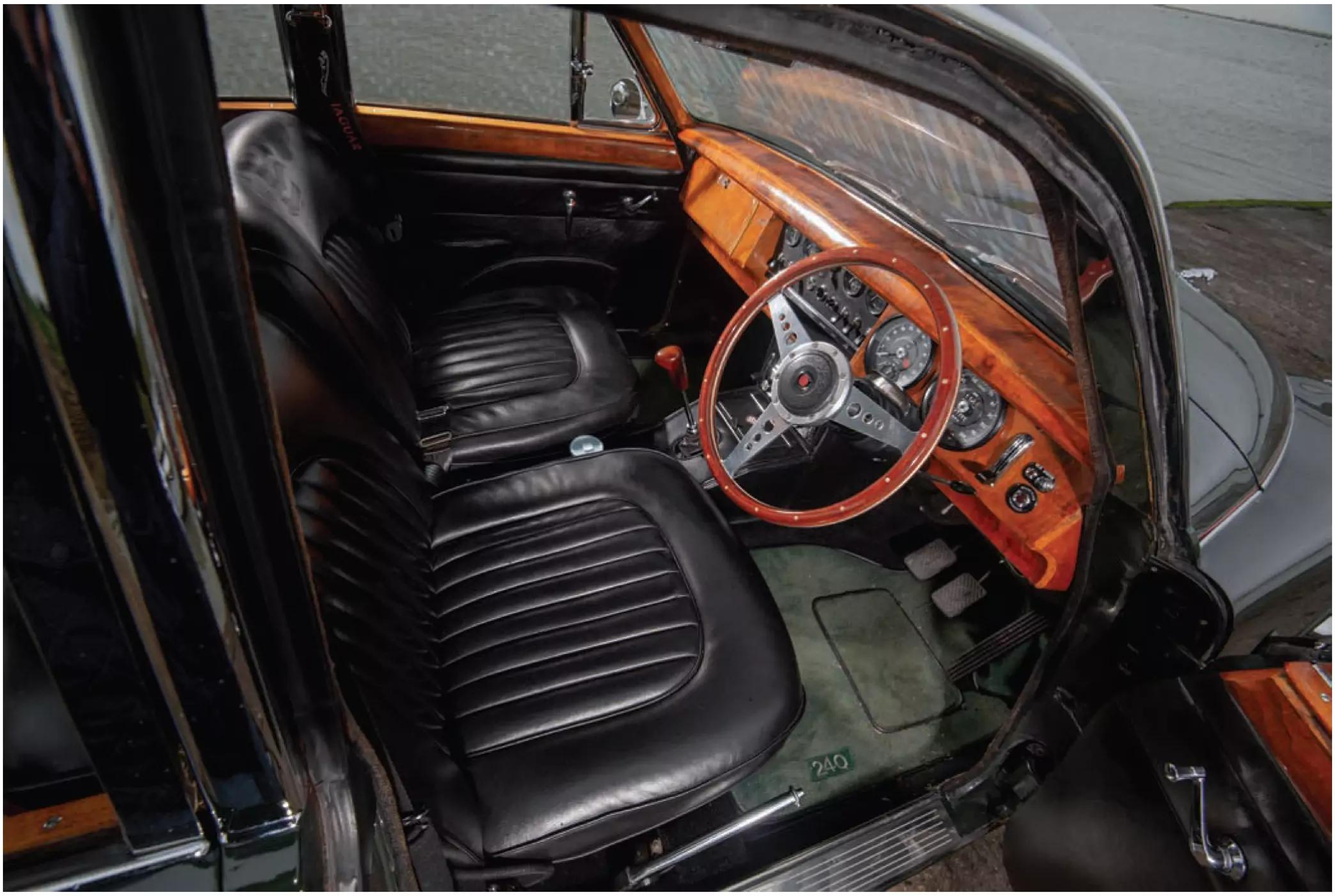
Production figures for the Mk2 line-up make impressive reading, with the 3.8 being the most successful. Of all the Mk2s built between 1959 and '67, a healthy 30,141 were the 3.8-litre flagship, with the 2.4 and 3.4 models achieving sales of 25,173 and 28,666 respectively. The short-lived 240 and 340 models attracted a total of 7,234 buyers between them, with the smaller-engined car accounting for 4,446 of those.

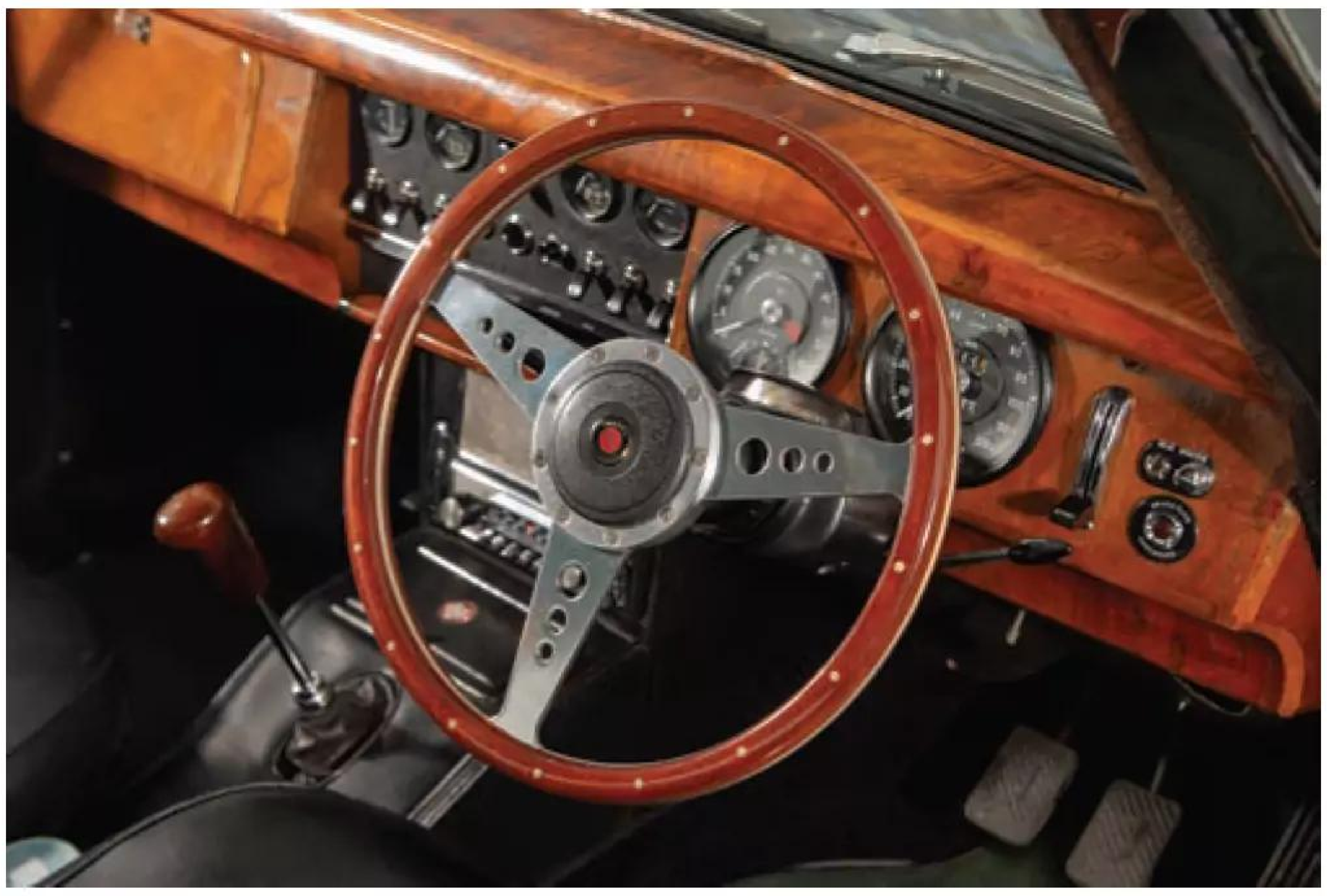
work on it, especially once it came to be seen as a classic later on."

The 240 was treated to fresh paintwork (in British Racing Green) and a bottom-end engine rebuild during the second custodian's lengthy period of ownership, with all the work being carried out to a high standard. And all these years later, the car's bodywork and paint finish still look impressive, as does its interior – although the latter is all thanks to

> "Anybody buying a 240 who specifically wanted hide-covered seats simply had to pay Jaguar a little extra for the privilege"







the car's third owner, says Don: "When I bought the car, the seats had already been reupholstered and the headlining had been replaced, so it was very tidy inside. The woodwork could do with being renovated at some point as the lacquer is showing signs of cracking, but that's something for the future maybe."

One upgrade that Don has carried out inside the car is the fitment of a slightly smaller wood-rimmed wheel: "It's about an inch less in diameter than the original wheel, and without power-assistance it does make the steering very heavy when I'm manoeuvring the car. Once you build up some speed though, the steering feels sharp and very precise."

HEAD REBUILD

During Don's six years of Jaguar 240 ownership, he has carried out most of the inevitable maintenance and repair jobs that have been needed, and still enjoys working on the car. However, when a cylinder head rebuild was needed (the second in the Jaguar's lifetime), he sought professional help: "It turned out to be a bent valve and the head had to come off and be rebuilt, a job I gave to a local classic car specialist. Since then the car has continued to run very well, and is an excellent choice for long journeys."

Don's certainly not afraid to use his 240, opting to take it on a trip to »

Laon in northern France a couple of years ago: "I have a one-previous owner X-TYPE that I use as my daily driver but I really enjoy putting pleasure miles on the older Jaguar. I obviously get to take it to shows and use it for days out in the summer, and it's a car that attracts a lot of attention wherever it goes."

The 240 benefits from various upgrades carried out by Don, including the fitment of electronic ignition for extra reliability, plus a cone-type air filter. Aesthetic changes include a pair of Coombs-style rear wheel spats, a set of front spotlamps and an impressive collection of sought-after badges on the bumper-mounted aftermarket badge bar. "The changes I've made might not be to everyone's taste, especially if they're a purist, but it's nothing that can't be put back to standard at some point in the future."

Since buying his 240, Don has continued its previous owners' habit of maintaining the car's history, adding to the large file of invoices and paperwork from more than half a century on the road. But is this impressive Jaguar's tendency to attract long-term owners likely to continue? "I've had a lot of lovely cars over the years," admits Don, "including several Porsches, an Aston Martin DB7 and a Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow. I sold my XJ-S a little while back, but I can't see me getting rid of the 240. Others might come and go but this one's staying with me, I reckon."

It's good to know that this well-preserved example of Jaguar's lowliest model of the late 1960s remains in safe hands for a long time to come. ■

"The cheapest version of the Jaguar 240 was available for just £1,365, making it a mere £8 dearer than the Rover 2000"

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LOW-MILEAGE DISCOVERY

Whist attending a classic car auction, Mark Antwis found himself unexpectedly acquiring a Jaguar 340 in need of restoration – and here he tells the story of the progress he's made since

PHOTOGRAPHY: **MATT RICHARDSON**

There I was enjoying one of the many pleasures of having retired from mainstream business after 45 years as a motor engineer: scouring the lots of a classic car auction. On this occasion I wasn't looking for anything in particular, having a Ferrari 308, a Series 1 E-Type FHC and an Aston Martin V8 already in the workshop to guarantee I have no spare time (whatever that is). But then I spotted a Jaguar 340 languishing outside, right at the back where the waifs and strays tend to be parked.

It was the nostalgia that attracted me initially. As a boy, I was brought up on a diet of Jaguars – a Mk1, a profusion of Mk2s, a Daimler V8 250, a MkX, an XJ6. Jaguars were my father's guilty pleasure. Long holidays to Scotland or Wales with the caravan on the back, taking three days to get to sunny Milford Haven before motorways were invented. Leave Rochester, first night on the Hogs Back, then slog through Reigate, Dorking… on and on for hours, following the traffic jams along the A25. Second night at Bristol, then punch on through day three to the west coast of Wales by late evening. Oh, such simple and slower times.

Anyway, back to the Jaguar 340. It looked tired but was showing just 23,130 miles – could it be true? A quick read of the catalogue and there it was: warranted mileage, with an MoT certificate from 1982 showing just 76 miles less than what was on the odometer. Intriguing. Apparently, the owner took the car off the road at about that time and it remained in dry storage for 37 years until being entered into this auction. Even more intriguing.

The bidding began. Silence. Clearly not the most sought after lot in the sale! Then someone made a silly bid and started the ball rolling. Silence again. I waited a few moments to see if there was any further take-up. Nothing. I waited until it looked as though the auctioneer was going to pass the lot through, and then I placed a bid considerably less than the lower of the guide prices. Silence again. The auctioneer, keen not to waste any more time, took my bid as 'provisional'. The owner was duly contacted, decided to accept my bid – and twenty minutes later I was the owner of an original, low-mileage Jaguar 340.

There are many avenues open to a determined researcher when it comes to unlocking the story of a car. Writing to the previous recorded keeper can bear fruit, but I didn't pin any great hope in this case as the car still bore the old-fashioned V5 from 1982. Still, I had nothing to lose other than the cost of a couple of stamps (a stamped, self-addressed envelope often helps), and so I sent a letter to Mr Short in Staines.

Seven weeks later, my mobile phone rang and the caller quickly identified himself as Steve, who was ringing about the Jaguar. I must admit to a little flutter of excitement, as you never know what the next few minutes will reveal. Steve was a friend of Mr Short and a one-time neighbour. Through the local network of neighbours and friends, my letter had been passed on to him, hence the phone call.

The story goes that Mr Short is now in his late seventies and lives abroad, having moved from the address on the registration document. He'd kept the car all those years with the intention of restoring it, but had subsequently lost his son to cancer. The car was a constant reminder, and so Mr Short decided to sell it to a trader. That stacked up, as I'd found an online advert dated just prior to when I bought the Jaguar at auction, the trader having presumably having entered it into the sale after being unable to sell it.

My next step was to request a vehicle keeper search from the DVLA. This came back with all sorts of goodies, namely a copy of the original green logbook that revealed the car had three previous addresses before Staines, all of them also in the west London area. Due to the confounded data protection rules, the name of the keeper at each of the addresses was blanked out; but the archivist at DVLA had clearly been diligent, as the accompanying paperwork confirmed the same owner at all the different addresses. Eureka, it was a one-owner car!

I also now understood another little mystery: even though it had a V5, the Jaguar had no number plates. In December 1982, Mr Short had transferred a 'private' number from the car, at which point it was assigned its current registration number. He then retired it to storage, with a view to having new number plates made and fitted once he'd completed whatever work he was planning – a plan that never came to fruition.

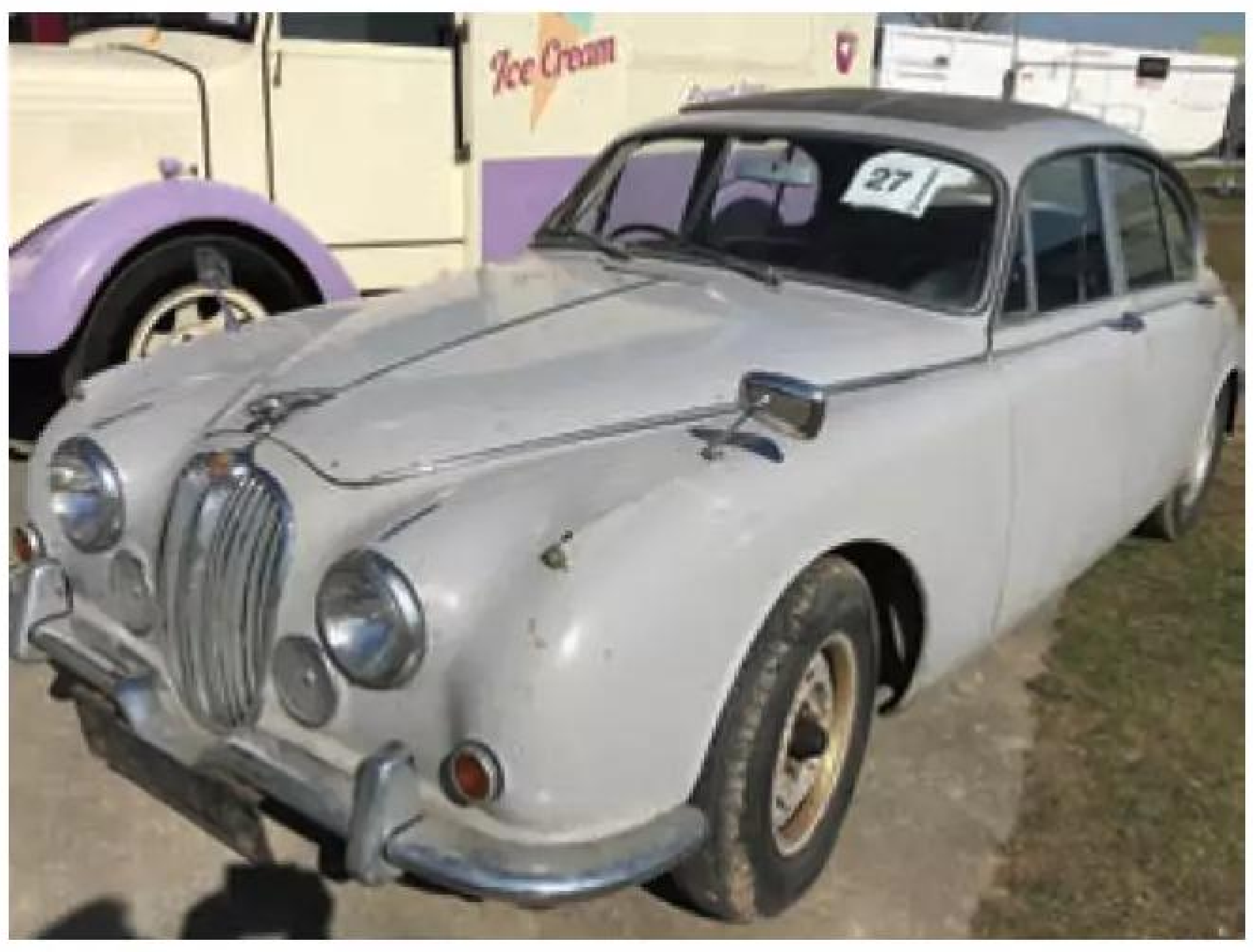
WORK BEGINS

My eagerness to start restoring the 340 was now supercharged. I began by removing the interior. The seats were dirty but entirely intact – not perished, not cracked – with only a cigarette burn in the driver's seat squab. The door cards were equally as original and complete. The patina was a joy, meaning that everything could »

> “As a boy, I was brought up on a diet of Jaguars – a Mk1, a profusion of Mk2s, a MkX, an XJ6…”

be conserved rather than restored. I removed the rear seat back and it was one of those moments that stopped me in my tracks; I was seeing it as it had been put together new in 1968, and the back of the seat was signed ‘HARRY’. It was a confident signature in blue wax, underlined by the upholsterer who had crafted this seat. For a moment I could imagine standing in that upholstery shop in Browns Lane next to Harry, while he lovingly built the seat, proud to be a part of the great Jaguar brand at the height of its reputation. I wonder if Harry is still around?

Ordinarily I would have had the entire bodyshell grit blasted but the inside was in lovely condition. I was committed to conserving as much of the originality as possible, maintaining patina where suitable. Balancing the restoration cost against the ultimate value precluded replacing major items; thorough refurbishment of all the units to the highest standard is so often cheaper than renewal, but does take more time. However, as my time is ‘free’, that’s the path I took. I stripped the outside of the ’shell down to bare metal, with the fabrication of small sections for the bottoms of the front wings (at the back of the arches) and three new jacking points being all it took to bring the metalwork back to full integrity.



This is how the 340 looked when Jaguar fan Mark Antwis spotted it at auction

Rejuvenation of the wood was entrusted to Rupert at Dorset-based Grange Classic Cars. My policy of conserving everything as original waivered here, as Rupert recommended burr walnut, insisting that the original finish could make it look too much like a school desk. He was right, of course; the walnut does look fabulous.

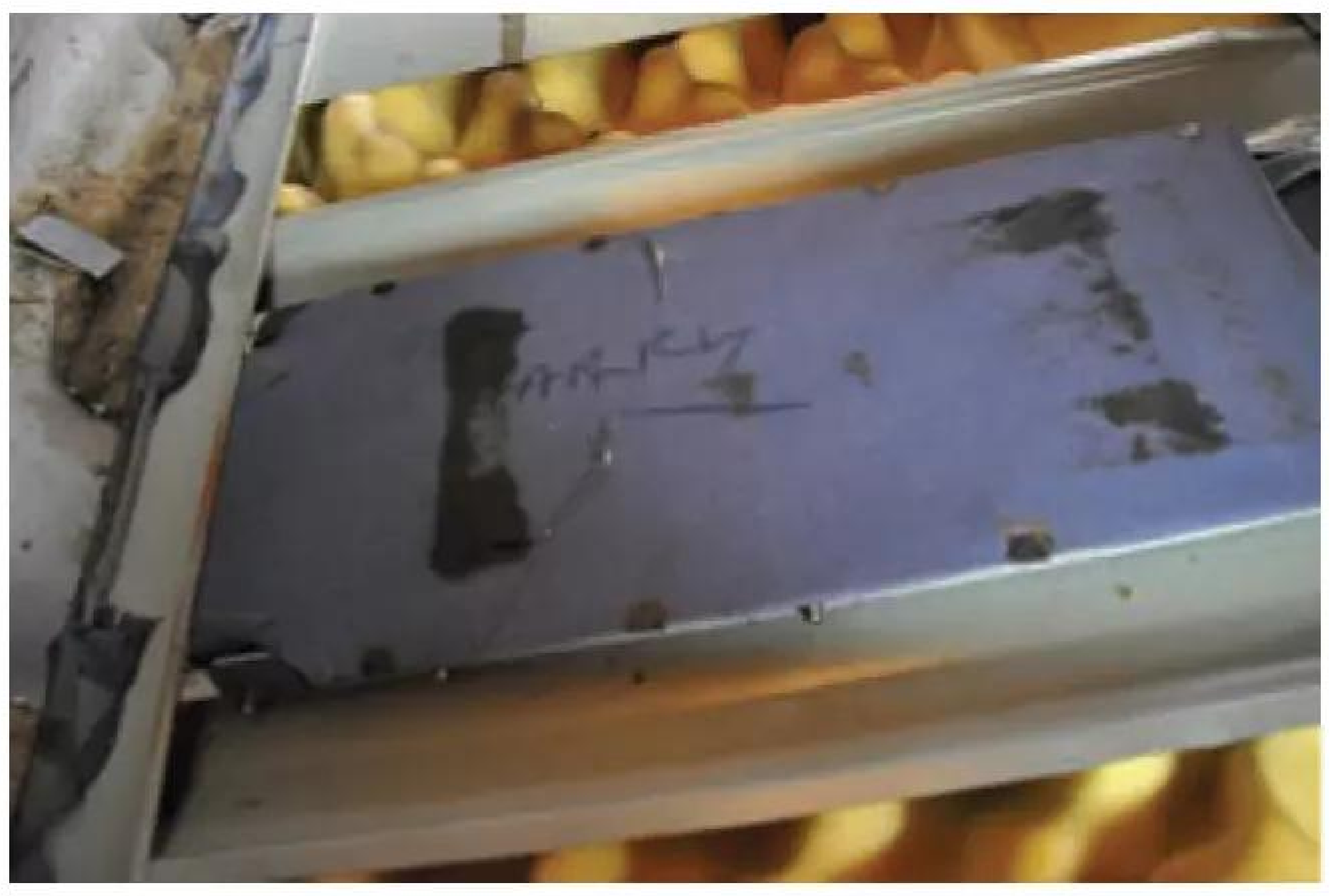
The Ambla seats and door card coverings were in good shape, albeit requiring a good clean. The cloth on the lower parts of the seats was discoloured, however, and so a call to Aldridge Trimming produced a perfect match of cloth, enabling me to replace the nasty sections and bring the upholstery back to its former glory. New carpets, roof lining and Webasto sunroof cover completed the soft parts.

My obsession with originality stems from my father inspiring me in all things mechanical. That sounds very romantic, but the reality is that Dad was suspicious of garages and tight with his cash. His headmaster’s salary would have been enough to pay someone, but he was a man engaged in life; everything was there to be done, including maintaining his Jaguars. He had a lovely expression for engineers, saying they had “the ability to think through their hands”.

FAMILY CONNECTION

Mum and Dad also loved motor racing. I have a photo taken by Mum of Jaguars racing at Brands Hatch in early 1958. I was born in the December, and Dad claimed there was a connection… although he had a cheeky sense of humour. Nevertheless, to my father’s horror, I ventured into a career as a semi-pro racing driver in the late 1970s and early ’80s when the likes of young Brazilians such as Ayrton Senna were forging their way.

I then changed tack to race engineer with a spell at Reynard, sharing a house in Bicester with one of their designers, Andrew, who had previously been involved in the Aston Martin sports car effort. The two of us hatched a plan for him to design a Formula Ford car for me to build and race and we would become racing car constructors. This is how my engineering company was born, servicing high-performance and luxury road cars to pay the bills while the racing car prototype was taking shape. Andrew went off to the Pacific Grand Prix team and I found myself with a very successful road car business to go with a wife, children and a house in the country. Life moved on without the racing cars.



Stripping the interior revealed the signature of Harry, presumably a Jaguar employee

All the mechanicals were removed as complete units ready for Mark’s careful attention

Mark’s policy was to complete each stage and set to one side for final reassembly later

Roll the clock forward. The sale of the business meant retirement, allowing me to focus on my collection of classic cars without the commercial pressures. I'd spent hours as a small boy under the car port, 'helping' to change brake pads, drain the oil and be the one in charge of tightening the wheel nuts. Now, 55 years later, here I was dismantling the same brakes and rebuilding the same XK unit.

With my newly acquired 340, out came everything as complete units – the engine and gearbox assembly; the front subframe, along with suspension, steering and brakes; the rear axle, suspension and brakes. And once the units were pressure-washed, it was so easy to work on them up on a bench, with the process being straightforward.

Take the front subframe assembly as an example. Dismantle everything down to the last nut and bolt. Pop it into the degreasing bath for a thorough clean, while all the small rusty parts go into the sand blast cabinet. Those too big for the cabinet and all parts for plating and powder coating go off to Ron and Ashley at Soda Blaster, based in Knockholt, for them to work their magic and transform them into beautiful pieces again.

Brake calipers illustrate perfectly the point of conservation versus replacement. After cleaning, I unbolted the two halves and removed the rusted pistons (discarding the tired seals and dust covers) and sand blasted the casings, straight away repainting them in the proprietary colour of high-temperature paint. Reassembled with revived pistons, seals and dust covers, I had a set of as-new but original calipers for about a quarter of the cost of new ones. This was the principle applied to all units, including the power steering pump, dynamo and starter motor, as there are people out there who can supply the parts to refurbish anything. Martin Robey and SNG Barratt were my most common port of call, but less well-known outfits such as Curd Brothers – who are all things electrical – did me proud on units that needed specialist testing.

Herein lies another tip for mechanical restoration: have the refurbishment parts to hand first wherever possible, and then complete the job in one go. Dismantle, clean, paint or plate, and then rebuild. I find my memory of how it all goes back together is still fresh (aided by lots of photographs before taking it apart), plus there's the satisfaction of seeing the entire front subframe on the bench, immaculate and gleaming, ready to be wrapped in plastic to keep it clean for when it's eventually reunited with the bodyshell. Bodywork can be dipped into and out of when the innumerable hours of preparation all get too tedious, but mechanical work completed with a start-to-finish approach helps to keep morale up.

PHASED RESTORATION

I find that a project 'lives' in three phases. The first is fun, because there's the excitement of embarking on a new adventure, and the last is exciting because the finished car is in sight. But the middle phase is where projects can stall and end, because all there seems to be is an awful lot to get through. Here is the psychological benefit of the start-to-finish approach; rather than a sea of rusty, dirty parts, you at least have completed units willing you on (pristine in their protective wrappers, set aside in a clean area of the workshop) when it all seems too much.

I confess to being excited at the prospect of getting stuck into the iconic XK six-cylinder power unit, something one can share probably only in the company of classic car people without it being followed by a silence and a look »

The preference for conservation saw Mark rebuilding the car's original brake calipers

Completed and fully bench-tested, the rebuilt XK engine is shown ready for refitting

The stripped bodyshell turned out to be very solid, in need of relatively little work

of bewildered dismay. My 340's engine had suffered from being left for 37 years without spark plugs, with the damp and ensuing electrolytic action seizing the pistons into the bores. New pistons are *de rigeur* in an engine rebuild, but it's not often I have to punch the old ones out of the bores! The cylinder head went away to Vulcan Engineering at Brands Hatch for a soda blast and new guides, valves and unleaded seats, while the block had a soda blast, deep clean and paint ready for me to rebuild with all new movable and perishable parts, plus the crank rear lip seal upgrade to ensure no nasty drips of oil.

The engine rebuild was rounded off with a crank-over on the bench to check all the compressions and oil pressure, and a double check for good oil feed to all the cam lobes. The Borg Warner – freshly overhauled with new torque convertor – slotted onto the back of the engine and there sat one of the iconic power units of the '60s.

At about the time the mechanical work was coming to an end, Castle Chrome called to tell me that the plethora of chrome pieces – large, small and tiny – were ready. There is something about original chrome brought back from the dead that warms a conservator's heart. They even managed to bring the pitted rear lamp housings back to their former glory, again at a fraction of the cost of new pieces. Window frames that were once tired and bumpers once dented were transformed into gleaming joys. The company even processed the delicate trims that fit into the front and rear windscreen rubbers, the cost of which would have amounted to more than the entire spend on the interior if I'd opted to buy new.

Meanwhile, over 300 hours of preparation had gone into the bodyshell. There followed five good coats of two-pack epoxy primer, flatted after the first three to ensure all the scratch marks from the metal had gone. Five healthy coats of Warwick Grey cellulose matched to the interior colour finished the job, whereupon a cup of coffee and a handful of chocolate biscuits seemed appropriate to celebrate a significant milestone.

The final phase – some 350 hours – sailed by in a sea of joy as the 'shell regained its suspension, engine, chrome and interior. Even though it was not complete, I wanted to get the car to the point of driving under its own power for the first time in 37 years. That day came on a bright and sunny April 30th, when the XK burst into life. As I reversed towards the workshop and nudged out into the sunlight, the sky instantly went dark and the mother of all thunderstorms dumped a month's worth of rain, at which point I shot back under cover. My moment of glory had lasted thirty seconds and the car had covered all of twenty yards…

Since then, the 340 has been a joy to own and drive, which brings us to the recent photo shoot for *Classic Jaguar*. Photographer Matt asked for an action shot showing the car really working its suspension. The joy of driving a classic of this era is that every driver action translates through the car like a free-flowing conversation of comment and reply. The pleasure of getting the high speed turn-in so smooth that the distortion from those tall 80-profile tyres is stifled; the body-roll flattened to keep the weight distribution; giving full power at just the right moment to squat the back down and pick up the inner front wheel; the XK roaring and the exhaust growling in delight, as the car picks up more and more speed. At that particular moment, I knew that the car's 1,400 hours of restoration work had truly paid off… ■

The completed 'shell was treated to five coats of its original hue of Warwick Grey

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THE X FACTOR

Every so often, we come across a car that really is special. And this car is arguably as close to a brand new X-TYPE as you will find

WORDS: **SAM SKELTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **PAUL WALTON**

Regular readers will know that for much of spring and summer 2024, I was without a working car. All credit has to go to Craig Cheetham, who helped out by offering me an X-TYPE 2.5 SE automatic from his seemingly endless car collection to tide me over. Craig knew my relationship with the X-TYPE was a difficult one, and thought that the loan of a car to use would bring me round to seeing things from his perspective. And it has to a degree – after 3,800 miles behind the wheel, I appreciate the car's better qualities, even if I do still find them a bit small and a bit firm for my own liking. I can understand why they have attracted legions of fans, who cherish their X-TYPEs as fervently as if it were a Mk2 or an E-type. But Craig wasn't finished there. "I know of a really good, low mileage car for sale," he said. "It would make a great feature car, and it would show you just how good an X-TYPE can be." Better still, it was with magazine friend Kim Cairns, who was only too happy to let us come along.

And with 12,900 miles from new, this 2004 2.5 SE manual might just be the best X-TYPE out there. The model is starting to come of age now; as Craig has said in a recent column, you see more and more of them at classic car shows, mollycoddled as modern classics, and the car that many have derided over the years as Jaguar's worst hour is starting to be accepted as the cut price, compact entry into Jaguar ownership it always was.

According to the invoice, this car's first owner – a Mr Terry Smith – gave £27,270 to his local Jaguar dealer Lancaster of Sidcup back in 2004, including a discretionary discount of £254.01 and a trade-in of an 18 year old Sierra 2.0i Ghia valued then at just £1. The invoice shows the car as Pacific Blue with Ivory leather – odd, because the leather as fitted and shown on the VIN plate is in fact Stone Grey. A typo or a mistake in the order, we wonder? It also shows as having been specified with the Convenience Pack, comprising metallic paint, carpet mats, parking sensors and power folding mirrors, at a cost of £750. And it was a car he clearly liked, despite the lack of miles, because he kept it for nineteen years. The history file does not relate why the car eventually came on to the market, but the likelihood is that for one reason or another, Mr Smith had stopped driving by the time it passed » to its next owner in April 2023. That owner was a regular and long standing customer of Kim Cairns based in Great Yarmouth. He recently part exchanged the car into Kim's stock against an S-TYPE, which is where we find it today.

The 2.5 SE was part of the original X-TYPE range as launched in 2001 – representing the highest trim level available with the smaller of the two engines. As the range expanded, first with the 2.0 V6 and the diesels, and then with the introduction of the high-spec Sovereign, the 2.5 SE found itself almost sitting smack in the middle of the range – enough power and toys to satisfy those who wanted their Jaguar experience to be the real deal, but relatively inexpensive when considered alongside the 3.0 Sovereign. The wider X-TYPE range was developed to take on the BMW 3-series – under Ford, Jaguar was to abandon the single saloon model that had served the company well since the 1960s, expanding down into new markets to take on the Germans. The model was subjected to a minor facelift in 2004, and another more thorough facelift in 2007, the latter of which gave it a mesh grille without a divider and new, chunkier bumpers. It was in this form that the range would leave production in 2009, the range in the UK having slowly been whittled down until just the diesels and the 3.0 Sovereign estate were left. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was a fan of the X-TYPE in estate form; owning at least 2 examples which were fitted with the registration PYN1F – which had adorned all Her Majesty's estate cars since the 1960s.

MPH
10
30
50
70
90
110
130
150
12894 MLS
BRAKE

When launched, Jaguar's MD Jonathan Browning told Fleet News that "The X-TYPE is perhaps the single most significant launch in Jaguar's history. We are very keen to develop our business relationships in the corporate market and we believe the X-TYPE will provide the opportunity for both sides to work together. We are launching not just a new car, but a new company." With plans for a new roadster – the F-TYPE, which ultimately wouldn't appear util 2014 – Jaguar was bullish about expanding into new markets and broadening the appeal of the marque which was traditionally seen as home to an older and more affluent clientele. To that end, the models most heavily marketed were in Sport trim, aiming squarely at the BMW 3-series with manual transmission and a distinct lack of exterior chrome. Traditional Jaguar customers were free to buy the slightly softer, but better equipped SE model, with traditional wood and leather, a chrome grille and more genteel trappings. While most Sports were sold with automatic transmissions – this being most traditional for Jaguar – it's rare to see an SE with a manual gearbox like this.

And it's rare to see one that's as beautiful as this car. The Pacific Blue coachwork pairs well with the Stone Grey leather, and the sapele wood is still dark

and unbleached. There's no rippling from car park dents, and no kerbing to the wheels. It is absolutely perfect to look at on the outside. Even the wheel centres, which always fade on cars of this era, show very little damage – this is a car that has been properly looked after and used sparingly throughout its life. And the seats are still supportive, no wear or damage of the sort typically seen as a twenty year old car reaches a six figure mileage. The carpets and the mats are so good we felt guilty stepping in. In short, there is not a mark on it, and this car would pass muster as an approved used car on a Jaguar dealer's forecourt. But does it drive as well as it looks?

With 200bhp, a manual gearbox and all wheel drive, it's easy to see how this car's dynamic benchmark when under development was the Subaru Impreza Turbo. It's not as raw an experience as the Subaru by some stretch, feeling much closer in spirit to small German execs such as the BMW 3-series, but the magic is there under the surface. And that gearbox helps to counter one of my criticisms of the X-TYPE as a model – namely, that it can't decide whether it's a sports saloon like the BMW or a shrunken XJ. In automatic form it isn't engaging enough to be the former, nor is it soft and cossetting enough to be the latter. It therefore sits in a halfway house for me, neither fish nor fowl, and that lack of clarity is my biggest issue with what is in fact a very capable small saloon. »

> "The X-TYPE is perhaps the single most significant launch in Jaguar's history"

Being a manual, this particular X-TYPE is not hampered by the same issue. The change of gearbox changes the character of the car, like night and day. What was once a car that couldn't quite make its mind up is now a very talented sports saloon – good steering with excellent turn-in, slightly firm suspension, excellent grip courtesy of its all wheel drive system, but with the manual control needed to make the most of it. Pipe down at the back, J gate enthusiasts. It's not the same thing, and you all know it. While a J gate gives more control than the average automatic, it isn't the same as having proper manual control, with a clutch you can quickly dip if you need to or the ability to feel pride in your rev matching. The gearbox makes the car into a true sports saloon – and having that in SE trim makes for a rather good Q-car. The hardest thing to understand with this car is precisely how its first and second owners have, between them, covered so few miles.

And that, in a sense, is the problem that this car has for me. Last year, I did 3,771 miles in Craig's 2.5, in just 12 weeks. That means that it would take me a little over ten months to put that mileage onto a car. As I write this in July, that means that by May I would have doubled the mileage, and by early the next year I'd have added twice its mileage count onto the total. And then it would be a 40,000 mile car. Still low, but a £10,995 car would then be worth half that – by using it, you will only devalue it. And more so, as you go. I could use it more sparingly, but then I'd be denying myself the use of a car I'd bought to enjoy. Low mileage cars don't, therefore, work for me – they don't work for everybody. The sort of owner this car needs is someone who would keep it in a heated garage, might only use it a few times per year, for the classic car shows I mentioned back at the start of the feature. A person, buying it in just the same way people bought Mk2s 40 years ago, is going to value its low mileage, low number of owners and complete history file much more than any second hand car buyer might have valued it a decade ago. And for an owner like that, this car is an unrepeatable opportunity to enjoy an X-TYPE just as they were back when they were brand new.

But Craig was right – now I have seen what an X-TYPE in as-new condition can be like, I feel like I understand them a little bit more. ■

THANKS TO: Kim Cairns Cars of Snettisham, Norfolk (01485 541526)

SPECIFICATION

2004 **JAGUAR X-TYPE 2.5 SE**

ENGINE: 2,495cc V6
POWER: 192bhp
TORQUE: 180lb ft
0-60MPH: 8.5secs
TOP SPEED: 140mph
ECONOMY: 28mpg
TRANSMISSION: 5-man auto/5-spd auto
PRICE NEW : £27,270
VALUE NOW: £10,995

> “The change of gearbox changes the character of the car, like night and day”

POWER PLAY

By being relatively thirsty, expensive and only on sale for a couple of years, the 380PS version of the XE S has always been overlooked. We ask whether it's time for that to change

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: **PAUL WALTON**

DOES SENSIBLE need to be boring? People who wear brightly coloured walking boots or eat chickpea curries certainly don't think so. And neither did anyone who bought the 380PS version of the XE S. Despite being a four-door saloon with a good-sized boot, with it having the same 3.0-litre supercharged V6 as the F-TYPE S, it offered a very similar performance as the two-seat sports car.

Yet despite this combination of speed and practicality, due its cost, relatively poor economy, and short time on sale, the S 380PS was never sold in big numbers making it one of the rarest mass-produced Jaguar saloons of the last ten years and therefore always under-appreciated. But with production of the XE now over, is it time for the model's place in Jaguar's recent history to be reassessed?

When the XE first went on sale in mid 2015, there was a supercharged 2,995cc V6 version from the outset. The same 340PS (335bhp) unit as the entry F-TYPE, it was very quick, officially reaching 60mph in just 4.9 seconds and having a limited top speed of 155mph.

As part of the XE's press launch, I hammered an Italian Racing Red example around the 2.44-mile long Circuito de Navarra in northern Spain. After several hours on the track, I came away impressed by both its handling, performance plus how well this mass-produced road car dealt with such an extreme setting.

"With my foot to the floor, the responsive 3.0-litre supercharged V6 engine accelerates instantly so by the pit complex the speedo is already touching close to 100mph," I wrote in the July 2015 issue of *Jaguar World*. "And it's still climbing."

At the same time as Jaguar introduced a range of new 2.0-litre »

four-cylinder engines in early 2017 such as the 200PS petrol and 240PS diesel, the company replaced the 340PS V6 with the full 380PS (375bhp) version. Although this power hike dropped the car's 0-60mph time down by a mere 0.1 of a second, the extra power gave the car an increased confidence.

"Plant the throttle, and the saloon picks up pace at an impressive rate," said *Auto Express* in May 2017. "With 332lb ft on tap, there's no lethargy from the raucous supercharged V6."

But regardless of plaudits like this, the car was only on sale for just 24 months before being deleted from the XE range in early 2019. No reason was given but I think both its high cost and poor economy resulted in poor sales. At just under £47k in 2017 it was £20,000 more than an entry model. Plus, officially returning 34.9mpg and emitting a fairly high 194g/km, it was never popular with the important UK fleet market which is based partly on the car's original value and partly what comes out of its exhaust (if it has one).

Plus, Jaguar had also started to push the 300PS (296bhp) version of its turbocharged 2.0-litre four-cylinder petrol Ingenium engine by then which had become an option for the XE in June 2017. Delivering over 36mpg and producing 177g/km CO2, the four-pot was slightly more efficient than the V6 yet still offered a similarly robust performance. With the 300 Sport effectively (if not directly) replacing the 3.0 S as the XE's top of range model in mid 2018 this, together with its lack of sales, has seen the 380PS version of the S become largely forgotten.

It's unknown how many XE V6s models were produced but according to the website, www.howrareismycar.co.uk, a mere 850 of both varieties are registered in the UK today. I'm not sure how accurate that figure is but it goes a long way showing the tiny numbers they were sold in.

Judging by this good-looking 2017 example in Storm Grey, this is a genuine shame. Admittedly the current owner has fitted an aftermarket front splitter and rear spoiler similar in design to those of the bonkers XE SV Project 8, but even without them the larger bumpers and subtle body mouldings that were bespoke to the S give it a more masculine appearance than a standard model. For clarity, the owner has replaced the original chrome

S badges on the grille and boot lid for aftermarket all-black versions as well making it appear even more menacing than normal. The 380PS model was never badged as such meaning aesthetically it's identical to the lower powered version.

This example has the 20in ten-spoke 'Propellor' style of alloys that in 2017 were a £420 option. By filling the arches better than the standard 19in rims they further add to the car's already aggressive stance.

But when I climb inside I'm reminded what a let-down I always thought the XE's interior was. This isn't due to being badly built; with good quality materials and the separate individual panels lining up perfectly, it feels like a step up from the previous generation of Jaguars including my own 2013 XF Sportbrake for example. No, my issue has always been with its design; rather bland and unimaginative in my eyes, it's not as exciting as the car's exterior might suggest. Despite this being the then top of the range model, other than the S logo embossed in the leather headrests of the sports seats it doesn't look or feel any different from the many entry diesels I've driven over the years. Saying that, the all black upholstery of this example does result in a rather sombre character compared to the optional red and black two tone scheme of the car I drove in Spain all those years ago.

None of this seems important, though, when I start the engine, twist the rotary gear selector around to drive and bury the throttle into the thick carpet. Thanks to the XE being mostly built in aluminium (only the rear floor and boot lid are in steel for improved weight distribution), the XE S tips the scales a relatively light 1,655kg (3,649lb) which together with the engine pushing out 375bhp results in a strong and effortless acceleration. The car thunders down a long, straight road with the same unbridled fury as an F-TYPE does, the high revving nature of the 3.0-litre V6 meaning I push it hard, the needle spinning all the way around to the other side of the digital dial before I finally change up using the left hand paddle on the steering wheel. The same eight-speed automatic transmission as the smaller powered cars, it's a better fit here, the 'box not hunting for the »

> "The car thunders down a long, straight road with the same unbridled fury as an F-TYPE does"

JAGUAR
DR51 NNA

right gear when in automatic mode like it can with the 2.0-litre models.

I'm disappointed when I discover the XE S doesn't have the switchable active exhaust like the F-TYPE does which becomes louder when in Sport mode or at the touch of a button. Still, at full throttle the noise of the engine increases to a wonderfully fruity wail, further adding to the excitement of this already exciting car.

Thanks to the S receiving an aluminium double wishbone similar to that fitted to the F-TYPE plus an integral link at the rear as well as close to perfect weight distribution, it remains one of the best handling saloons of the mid 2010s, better in my opinion than the slightly cumbersome Audi A4 or Mercedes Benz C-Class. Perfectly composed, delicately agile, and with nicely weighed steering, it turns in sharply and has remarkable poise for a rear-wheel-drive saloon. Yet amazingly, uneven surfaces aren't felt to any great degree in the cabin meaning it still rides with an elegance you'd expect from a Jaguar saloon and far better than the always hard BMW 3-Series of the same era.

The last time I drove a XE S 380PS was way back in October 2017 when I compared one with a 1959 3.4 saloon for the January 2018 issue of *Jaguar World*. "From 50mph to 60mph, its acceleration is vicious," I said seven years ago, "and I'm propelled forward as if riding a hurricane."

Almost a decade later I've enjoyed driving this example just as much as I did then. The car's reasonably high economy and CO2 might look even poorer compared to the standards of today's hybrids, but the car has aged better than I have in that time. It doesn't surprise me when the owner tells me uses it every day for his short commute to work.

Hard to understand, then, why these fantastic cars are such great value with the 380PS worth around £20k. That's second-hand Ford Galaxy or entry level Mercedes-Benz E-Class money. I'd know which I'd rather have.

Low production figures aside, I think one of the reasons why the XE S has been largely forgotten about is because it was never given the coveted R badge the V6 models (the 380PS especially) richly deserved. Due to their often uncompromising image and performance, from the first XJR to the final F-TYPE R, they all have a halo that the S models sadly lack.

Jaguar is now a long way down its trajectory in becoming an all-electric manufacturer by 2026 meaning high-performance petrol engined saloons like this are already a thing of the past. I'm sure in years to come we'll think back to when its cars were not only sensible like EVs are, but exciting too. And when that happens, we'll finally give the XE S 380PS the recognition it deserves. ■

THANKS TO: Owner of the car featured here, Doug Sinnerman

BUYING GUIDE

JAGUAR MK2

Discover what to look for when buying Jaguar's most desirable saloon car of the Sixties

WORDS: **ROB HAWKINS**

The profile of the Jaguar Mk2 has been raised above and beyond similar Jaguar models of the Sixties thanks to bank robbers and television programmes such as Inspector Morse. Consequently, abandoned projects and tatty imports rarely sell for less than around £7,000-£10,000, and restored or original examples in top condition can easily cost £50,000-£70,000 or more. Even a Mk2 in average condition can demand £20,000. And there are often clear price differences between a 2.4 and 3.8, with the latter offering better performance statistics. The Mk2 badge is also very popular, more so that the Daimler 250 – which is the same car but with a V8 engine, yet it's often cheaper. The similar-shaped models that replaced the Mk2, such as the 240, 340 and the S-type, are also less expensive. Is the Mk2 the wiser investment thanks to its popularity?

Produced between 1959 and 1967, the Mk2 replaced the 'Mk1' that first appeared in 1955. These models adopted their Mk1 and Mk2 titles after production had finished; at the time of manufacture, they were known according to their XK engine sizes – 2.4, 3.4 and 3.8.

The Mk1's specification soon made it a market leader, being a modern monocoque design with independent front suspension and powered by the well-known XK engine. It also helped to pave the way for the Mk2, whose specification boasted all-round disc brakes, optional power-assisted steering and leather upholstery. Nearly 84,000 Mk2s were produced before the model was discontinued in September 1967, replaced by the 240 and 340.

LIVING WITH A MK2

If you are thinking about buying a Mk2, consider its size. At 4.59m (181in) long, it's a similar length to an X-TYPE, although it's much slimmer at 30cm, which is a noticeable amount for a single garage. Surprisingly, it's a little taller than an X-TYPE. Even more surprising in similarity is the weight, around the one-and-a-half-ton mark.

The sofa-sized front and rear seats fitted to most Mk2 models provide an insight into the level of leather-upholstered luxury this model offered when it was new, complemented by a full-width wooden dashboard. On automatic models, there's an uncluttered feel to the gearbox tunnel because the gear selector is mounted on the steering column, while the handbrake on all models is discreetly mounted on the outside of the driver's seat base.

Seatbelts were only an optional extra until they became compulsory on new cars (and then only for the front seats) in 1965, so don't be surprised if they are not present on a pre-65 Mk2. Front seatbelt mounting points should be fitted as standard to these cars from 1962 onwards, so seatbelts can be fitted. Pre-62 cars will need reinforcements and mounting points added. There are no rear seatbelts and mounting points on any model. »

On the road, a Mk2 should feel typical of many a rear-wheel-drive saloon with a live axle behind the back seats, but, in many cases, a little more refined thanks to the positioning of the wheels, being close to all four corners. A 2.4-litre Mk2 may feel disappointingly sluggish; it's the slowest of all models with 120bhp at the flywheel, which claims a 0-60mph time of a little over 17 seconds.

The larger 3.4-litre engine reduces acceleration time by almost five seconds, whereas the 3.8 is the most impressive, with a 0-60mph time of 8.5 seconds. Despite those differences, top speeds are less noticeable, because all models of Mk2 are capable of easily exceeding the national limit on a motorway.

The only potential disadvantage to such impressive performance figures is fuel economy, which generally hovers around 20mpg, but what you spend on fuel, you save on the free car tax and, possibly, cheap classic car insurance.

CORROSION

A wise starting point when considering the purchase of a Mk2 is to look at the most expensive repairs associated with these models – corrosion. The modern unitary construction of the all-steel bodywork of the Mk2 was innovative in the Fifties and Sixties, but means the bodywork cannot be separated from its underpinnings to leave a rolling assembly, unlike an XK 120/140/150, for instance. Consequently, the structural integrity of the bodywork is important, so check the sills, chassis legs, floors and jacking points are all intact. Look for cracking around the rear section of each front wing where it's attached to the sill – this is a common area for corrosion and is expensive to repair.

Water traps that can result in corrosion include the chassis legs, jacking points, doors, boot, around the A-posts and the rear seat. Tim Griffin, at Classic Motor Cars (CMC), warns that water can leak through via the rear doors, soak the rear carpets and corrode the rear floors. The front-most mounting point for the rear leaf springs is underneath the rear floors, so it can corrode and weaken too. Lift the carpets and the rear seat base to check the condition of the floors and also to look underneath them.

Replacement panels and repair panels are available and vary in price. Budget for around £70 for a jacking point, for example, and £30 for a floor repair panel. A replacement spare wheel well costs around £420 and a door skin is from £90.

Check all wheelarches for corrosion, which are potentially expensive to repair. Trim may have been fitted along the lips of the arches, so feel around it to check for rust, being careful on any sharp edges. Rear arch outer repair panels vary from £300 to £1,500, and £200-£250 for a larger inner rear arch section. Similarly, the front wings can corrode and, while a replacement will cost nearly £4,000, there are several repair panels ranging in price from £70 to £600, so a rusty wing can sometimes be rebuilt.

"A good body with worn mechanicals is much better than a rusty body with good mechanicals"

Sills are seemingly less costly to repair, with outer sill repair panels costing around £200 and inners £80, but once the old metalwork has been removed, there may be more corrosion to cut away before clean, rot-free metal can be found. And don't expect a sill replacement to be completed quickly; CMC finds them labour intensive, taking around 40 hours (prior to painting). This is because the bottom of the front wing needs to be cut to separate it from the sill, closing panels are often required, the bodyshell needs to be secured to a jig to maintain its shape, and the doors and most of the interior need to be removed.

One advantage when it comes to looking for corrosion, especially on the underside, is that very little is hidden. So, providing you can safely inspect the underneath of the vehicle, you should be able to spot any problematic rust.

Some rear suspension mounting points need to be checked for corrosion, including the hangers and mounts for the rear leaf springs and those for the Panhard rod (fitted between the rear axle and the offside rear of the bodywork). Budget for around £100 for an upper reinforcing channel for the rear leaf springs and a similar amount for a mounting bracket for the Panhard rod.

Tim offers some good advice, "Buy the best body you can afford. A good body with worn mechanicals is much better than a rusty body with good mechanicals."

SUSPENSION CHECKS

At the front of the Mk2, suspension consists of upper and lower wishbones with a shock absorber inside a coil spring resting on the lower wishbone. Both wishbones are attached to the upright via ball-joints and there's also an » anti-roll bar. At the rear, there is a live axle with leaf springs, telescopic shock absorbers, upper link arms and a Panhard rod.

Typical suspension problems include worn bushes, broken and corroded coil and leaf springs, leaky dampers and worn anti-roll bar drop-links. Some of these problems can be spotted through a visual inspection of the suspension (look for perished rubber, in particular), or can be heard as a knocking noise during a test drive.

Many suspension components are reasonably priced. A front coil spring, for example, costs around £40, although we recommend changing both fronts together. A set of rear leaf springs costs £250-£500. A Panhard rod costs around £60, and budget for around £80 for a rear telescopic damper.

Repair kits and upgrade kits are sometimes a worthwhile investment, and a bonus if they have already been fitted because, in some cases, they can be quite expensive. A rear conversion to coil springs can cost nearly £3,000, and an uprated front anti-roll bar and coil spring kit £600. These can be tempting modifications, but check the full details of anything fitted and whether it's what you want. A conversion from standard rubber suspension bushes to polyurethane, for instance, may result in a harsh ride quality and potential stress fractures in the suspension mounting points if a suitable Shore hardness of bush hasn't been selected.

Ask the seller whether the suspension is routinely lubricated – there are several grease points that require multipurpose grease to be pumped through.

BRAKE INSPECTION

The standard braking system comprises a servo-assisted single-circuit system with disc brakes and twin-piston Dunlop calipers all round, although many have been uprated at the front to four-pots from specialists such as Coopercraft. The handbrake operates a separate set of brake pads on the rear discs, which are mechanically operated by the handbrake cable.

Standard brakes should be routinely stripped, cleaned and inspected to avoid seized components, especially the brake pads, which can become stuck. While new pads are cheap at £25-£50 a set, an exchange rear caliper isn't, at around £630. A single piston front cylinder (there are two per caliper) is £150-£200.

Neglectful maintenance can result in more brake-related problems, especially with the mechanical handbrake, which operates a separate set of brake shoes on the rear discs. All the handbrake components can be stripped, cleaned and rebuilt if required, but it's time-consuming and if new parts are required some are expensive, such as the handbrake mechanism attached at each brake disc, which cost around £315 each. So, make sure the handbrake is working properly and don't be persuaded that it's not required for an MOT-exempt vehicle, especially one with an automatic gearbox.

Upgraded brakes, such as front four-pots, seem to be a worthwhile modification and an acceptable period upgrade. And, if they are already fitted, this saves £600-£900 for the cost of the conversion. Specialist P&K Thornton favours upgraded front brakes, especially the popular

four-pots, finding they can improve braking performance with a greater brake pad footprint, dissipate heat more efficiently and, when compared to replacing standard front calipers, the upgrades are similarly priced.

STEERING & TYRES

Power-assisted steering is fitted to some Mk2 models. In all cases, check for smoothness and consistency of steering during a test drive. Worn steering boxes and movement in the column can generally all be fixed. Budget for around £1,200 for a non-power-assisted reconditioned steering box and over double that for one that is power-assisted. Upgrading to a power-assisted and more modern steering rack costs around £3,000.

Steering problems, such as wandering and veering, may not be down to the steering and instead be caused by incorrect wheel alignment and aged or worn tyres. Check the condition of the tyres, looking for uneven tread wear, which may not only suggest the wheel alignment needs adjusting, but could also indicate there's wear in the suspension. At the same time, look for a four-digit date stamp on the sidewall of each tyre. The last two digits signify the year of manufacture. Tyres generally last for six or seven years, regardless of the depth of the tread. Over time and during heat cycles, the rubber starts to deteriorate and the sidewall starts to weaken, so if the tyres are past their lifespan don't ignore the cost of a new set of tyres.

The choice of tyres on a Mk2 is critical to the car's ride quality, handling and road noise. Longstone Classic Tyres (LCT) explains that the Mk2 was originally equipped with Dunlop RS5 cross-ply tyres on 15in-diameter wheels but that Dunlop no longer manufacture classic road tyres. It recommends upgrading to the period radial tyres instead, including the Pirelli Cinturato CA67, which costs around £1,000 for a set of four. Michelin XAS tyres are a little cheaper.

"Pirellis are perfect because they are genuine period tyres with a period carcass made to handle well when fitted to a chassis from that period or used as an alternative to a cross-ply," says Dougal Cawley at LCT. "The attraction to the 180HR15 Michelin XAS is that it is a slightly odd special tyre size that is tall and thin, thereby keeping the steering light. Also, the XAS was developed in conjunction with the Citroën DS to make it stop wandering at cruising speeds on the increasing number of dual carriageways that were popping up over Europe in the Sixties. In other words, it was making cars like a Citroën DS or »

> **"Budget for around £1,200 for a non-power-assisted reconditioned steering box and over double that for one that is power-assisted"**

Mk2 Jaguar more suited to modern roads."

The Mk2's steering is not only quite heavy, but Dougal says that at cruising speeds it tends to wander and follow the unevenness in the road, so you have to correct it frequently to keep the car travelling in a straight line, which gets worse with wider tyres. This is where he favours the Michelin XAS tyres, explaining, "The asymmetric carcass and tread pattern combined with the rounded thin footprint overcome a lot of these derogatory effects. Fitting XAS is like increasing the caster of your front axle without making the steering heavier. XAS helps a classic car drive in a straight line."

XK ENGINE TROUBLE

The Mk2 is powered by the XK engine, displacing 2.4-, 3.4- or 3.8-litres. With a cast iron engine block and alloy overhead twin-cam cylinder head, the XK engine is known for its reliability, providing it is routinely maintained, so ask if its oil and filter have been changed every year, regardless of mileage because oil degrades over time. Similarly, the engine coolant should be renewed every two years and the engine and radiator flushed out to remove any traces of silt that can potentially block waterways. Luckily, all the Mk2's XK engines have short cylinder head studs, unlike later XKs, whose studs extend into the coolant galleries and can, therefore, become corroded and seized. However, if you are looking at a Mk2 with a later XK engine transplanted, check whether the coolant has been routinely changed and the engine flushed every two years, regardless of mileage.

Look around the underside of the engine for oil leaks, particularly where the engine and gearbox are attached. Oil can leak out via the rear main oil seal, which is a rope seal, unless it has been uprated to a later type. Renewal of the seal requires the engine to be removed and stripped.

When the engine is running, listen for rattles from the top area, which may be caused by worn camshafts (often caused by worn bucket guides or distortion of the cams through lack of maintenance). Tim Griffin, at CMC, warns that while a new set of camshafts will cost around £800, it's worthwhile having the cylinder head stripped and rebuilt before fitting them, which means the final bill can easily quadruple.

Other engine noises to listen out for include around the front where the timing chains are located. Noise from here could suggest worn tensioners and guides, which involves a partial stripdown to replace them.

When the engine is running, check the oil pressure is showing at least 40psi at 2,500rpm, although it may be difficult to trust the accuracy of the car's oil pressure gauge. The oil pressure should be 15psi-20psi at idle, but if it is much lower it may be possible to adjust it with a different oil pressure relief valve.

With the engine idling, press the clutch pedal (manual gearbox only). If the engine revs drop, this may mean the centre main thrust bearings are worn. These can be replaced, although this problem, which increases end float in the crankshaft, can result in excessive wear elsewhere, so the engine may need a more thorough stripdown and rebuild.

It's worth noting that the cost of rebuilding an XK engine isn't cheap and can easily cost as much as, or more than, an abandoned Mk2 at £10,000. Costs do vary between engines due to a more involved rebuild. For example, the 3.8-litre XK has cylinder liners, unlike the smaller engines. These cylinder liners should be removed and inspected for corrosion during a stripdown and rebuild.

After the bodywork, one of the biggest potential bills for a Mk2 is its engine, and it's difficult to know for certain that an engine won't fail or develop expensive problems. All you can do is be meticulous in checking it over.

TRANSMISSION

Up until September 1965, the four-speed Moss manual gearbox was fitted alongside a three-speed Borg-Warner DG automatic (replaced by the more popular Type-35). Thereafter, Jaguar replaced the Moss 'box with its own four-speed manual, which was equipped with an optional overdrive.

The Moss gearbox has no synchromesh in first gear, so only select this gear when stationary and adopt a high degree of mechanical sympathy when easing the gear lever into position. All other gears should be smooth to select; all gears on the Jaguar manual gearbox should also be smooth to select. However, CMC's Tim Griffin explains that the Moss gearbox, in particular, needs the correct type of gear oil to operate smoothly, which is an SAE-30 grade.

According to Ken Evans of Klassik Transmissions, "The Moss gearbox suffers from age- and mileage-related problems, such as worn main bearings at the front and rear. The layshaft always wears on the first gear end because of the straight-cut first-gear arrangement. The gaskets leak, together with the layshaft and reverse shaft where it fits into the rear alloy casing. This is due to the rubber O-ring seals hardening over the years. As for synchromesh, this wears particularly on second gear, possibly because most drivers are keen to have a quick change up the gearbox from a spirited acceleration from first."

Some spare parts are no longer available for the Moss 'box. From what is available, Ken charges from £750 to overhaul a unit and refresh any bearings, gaskets and seals, and he has devised a method to re-work the synchromesh that improves the gearchange.

Check the clutch operation on all manual gearboxes, ensuring there's sufficient travel in the pedal and that there are no signs of slipping under acceleration. A clutch kit costs between £250 and £400, but requires the engine to be removed; this isn't a DIY job unless you have an engine crane.

Automatic 'boxes generally become problematic over time due to wear and tear, resulting in intermittent gearchanges, failure to change gear, slipping due to wear of the clutch plates and/or bands, and excessive transmission noise caused by worn-hard components (gears and bushes). If the vehicle starts to creep when drive or reverse is selected, it isn't a gearbox issue, but is instead caused by failure of a rear-mounted brake valve (which helps to apply the brakes and keep the vehicle stationary until the accelerator pedal is pressed).

According to the independent Borg Warner Specialist (borgwarnerspecialist.co.uk), the brake bands and friction plates often wear inside these gearboxes. A rebuild of an early DG gearbox is often expensive at between £2,000 and £3,000, whereas the later Type-35 gearbox is much cheaper, from around £500.

ELECTRICAL ISSUES

The Mk2's electrical systems initially used a positive earth, but were switched to negative earth towards the end of production. Some vehicles have been converted. Converting to negative earth is feasible, but not as simple as switching over the battery terminals. P&K Thornton can do this conversion, which includes fitting a new battery and terminals, converting the clock, radio, tachometer and ammeter, fitting a new fuel pump and switching the wires on the wiper motor and heater. Prices vary, depending on the work required, but P&K budget for around £1,680 for all the parts and work involved.

Electrical trouble can be caused by a multitude of problems, including earthing issues, broken wiring and water ingress, so check all the electrical equipment works and don't be convinced that any problem can easily be fixed with a new length of wire or a bit of a clean. If the tachometer doesn't work, for instance, and its generator has failed (it converts the mechanical movement of the tacho cable into an electrical reading for the instrument), a replacement costs around £160. »

"Moss 'box with its own four-speed manual, which was equipped with an optional overdrive"

"Myrtle Ltd, for instance, charges from £120 to re-lacquer a section, and around £3,000 to restore all the interior wood"

Look for popular and acceptable upgrades that can be a financial bonus on a car for sale, such as electronic ignition (123ignition conversions can cost £300-£400), or an alternator instead of a dynamo, which can cost around £600.

INTERIOR CHECKS

Carefully check the upholstery, carpets, headlining and dashboard. If you are looking at a restoration project and most of the interior needs replacing or even sourcing, then this isn't going to be cheap. A pair of leather front seat covers costs around £1,000, as do the rear seat covers – vinyl seat covers are roughly half this amount. Pre-cut foam for the seat bases and backs costs around £125 each. A complete carpet set, in wool, costs £400 and a headlining kit costs around £200. And if all, or parts of, the dashboard and other wood trim are missing or need restoring (there are up to 29 pieces inside a Mk2, including optional rear picnic tables), budget for anything from a few hundred pounds to a few thousand. Myrtle Ltd, for instance, charges from £120 to re-lacquer a section, and around £3,000 to restore all the interior wood. It can also restore original steering wheels for £330.

MISSING ITEMS

Whether you are buying a barn find, an abandoned project or a concourse-condition Mk2, do your homework when it comes to specifications and what should be fitted. If parts are missing, no matter how trivial they may be, they can be expensive to source, or may be impossible. Take the period-looking glass washer bottle for the windscreen washers, which was made by Lucas. If it's missing or has been replaced with something else, a new one will cost between £125 and £225. If the door seals are worn or missing, budget for around £125 for a new set. Missing chrome window-winder handles are £80 each. A chrome exterior door handle costs around £100 for one, so if all four are missing or heavily pitted, that's a noticeable amount of money to bear in mind.

OUR VERDICT

The most desirable Jaguar saloon of the Sixties is currently the Mk2, so if you want a piece of the action, be prepared to pay a premium price over the similar-looking 240, 340 and S-type.

While originality is a preference, there are numerous acceptable upgrades to look for, including better brakes and suspension, later steering components and modern electrical components (alternator, negative earth, electronic ignition), all of which can mean a saving of hundreds or thousands of pounds.

At present, it seems that bargain-priced Mk2s are scarce, so anything too cheap probably has something to hide. We recommend investing your money wisely via a specialist or restorer, where you can take your time to look over a car, estimate the cost of any work required and make an informed decision. ■

THANKS TO:

Classic Motor Cars (01746 765804; www.classic-motor-cars.co.uk)

Klassik Transmissions (07801 882771; www.klassiktrans.co.uk)

Borg Warner Specialist (borgwarnerspecialist.co.uk)

Tom Lenthall Ltd (0118 973 1614; www.tomlenthall.co.uk)

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BUYING GUIDE

BUYING A DAIMLER V8 SALOON

What you need to know to buy the Mk2's less popular sibling

WORDS: **SAM SKELTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **PAUL WALTON**

When Jaguar bought Daimler in 1960, plans to launch a smaller saloon based on the Vauxhall Cresta were abandoned. But Daimler distributor Stratstone wanted a smaller Daimler to sell alongside the Majestic, and incentivised Jaguar to create one by offering to give up its secondary VW franchise and focus solely on Jaguar and Daimler if a small Daimler in the manner of the Conquest could be created.

The most cost-effective solution was to take the Jaguar Mk2 and fit Daimler's 2.5 litre V8 as fitted to the SP250 sports car – along with an automatic gearbox. A Daimler grille and rear plinth were fitted along with some minor interior changes, and the Daimler 2.5V8 was launched on 8 October 1962. Priced at £1,786 against the £1,664 of the Jaguar 3.4 Mk2 manual, it was pitched above the Jaguar 2.4 by over £200 and even, initially, more than the powerful 3.8 litre manual. For 1967 »

the Daimler was updated alongside the Jaguars, but avoided the cost cutting measures – the new V8-250 kept the leather trim and foglamps of the older car. It was replaced in 1969 by the XJ6-based Sovereign 2.8. Today, it's a better value alternative to the Jaguar badged models.

BODYWORK

Much like the Jaguar Mk2 upon which it's based, the monocoque shell of the Daimler V8 hides a number of rust traps that if left untreated can render the car unsalvageable. Check the front chassis lefts, as water can enter and rot out the front jacking points by the A-posts. While there check the bottom of the wings and how they sit relative to the doors- sill issues can deform the A-posts and thus adversely affect how the doors shut. This can only be done properly on a jig, so if there are bills for sill repairs that look too cheap be worried. The Panhard rod mounting in the offside rear arch is a favourite for rot, as are the rear spring hangers and ARB mounts. Floorpans can also rot out with alarming speed, as can the area where the rear door and wheel arch spat meet. Water can also be trapped between panel skins, so check the boot lid and doors for corrosion along the lower lips.

Fortunately given the commonality with the Mk2, everything is available – though you might not like the prices. A door skin might be around £60, but you're looking at nearer £3,000 for a front wing given the complexity and size of the panel shape. By the time it's welded on properly and painted, the overall total will be nearer to £4,000 so if you're looking at a car with suspect front wings, make sure it's factored into the price. The good news is that repair sections can be had for under £100 depending upon where the problem is, and a good bodyshop can make repairs invisible. Chromework can tarnish, but most parts are available in good used condition or new depending upon your budget. Only the grille and rear plinth are unique to the Daimler models.

ENGINE AND TRANSMISSION

This is the one area in which the Daimler differs drastically from the Jaguar – and while opinions differ and the Jaguar 3.4 and 3.8 certainly have more power, we think that the Edward Turner-designed V8 is an absolute gem and punches above its weight. The majority were fitted with Borg Warner Model 35 automatic gearboxes, but a handful were specified with Jaguar's four speed manual with overdrive. These manual cars are more likely to be the later V8-250 models. Depending on your use, you'll be likely to need an annual service – though if you're doing over 6,000 miles per year we'd advise two.

Some have been known to suffer piston crown failure, but from 1968 these were strengthened and most of the problem cars have already had replacement engines or pistons. Its crucial to maintain the right concentration of antifreeze in the cooling system – you need a 50/50 mix to prevent corrosion in the waterways. If the system develops leaks through excess pressure, this is likely the culprit. The centre bearings on the »

crankshaft can wear within 40,000 miles – replacement can be done in situ but isn't ideal. Oil pressure will-drop with worn bearings – 15psi at idle and 35-45psi at 3mph are what you're looking for, but the gauge isn't known for its accuracy. Rear crank oil seals can leak, the only solution is replacement which means removing the engine, or you can keep topping the oil up if a small leak doesn't worry you.

The Borg Warner box is known to be long lasting, so if it's changing well on test there are unlikely to be issues. The same can be said for the Salisbury axle at the back – with routine maintenance this is a reliable unit.

SUSPENSION, STEERING AND BRAKES

Broadly, the suspension setup is the same as on Jaguar's Mk2 – though the front spring rates are different owing to the lower weight of the Daimler engine. Front suspension needs regularly greasing but if long-lived and hardy if correctly maintained. The front suspension is carried in a subframe, the front bushes can deteriorate and should be checked regularly. When these bushes shear, it can affect the handling. Rear leaf springs can settle over time and the bushes that support them will need attention to ensure the springs still have the necessary support. The gas shocks on each corner shouldn't pose any issues, as they tend to be good for high mileages. Front wishbones can also wear. If the car feels sloppy in bends, the odds are it'll need an overhaul – Mk2s and Daimler V8s are supple in terms of ride, but taut in the bends.

Most Daimler V8s have power steering, fitted to a Burman recirculating ball setup. It's the same setup fitted to Jaguar Mk2s, and is largely problem free. Later models build upon this with sealed ball joints. The adjustable steering column can suffer slack, usually bushes which are easy to replace.

Dunlop disc brakes and a Lockheed servo are standard fitment – again, like the Jaguar upon which the Daimler V8 is based – and if the brakes are in good condition, they're effective. Sticking calliper pistons can be an issue in cars that have been laid up, while steel brake lines if still fitted ought to be replaced with Cunifer at the earliest opportunity. The handbrakes were never much cop, so don't be worried if it's not great on test.

INTERIOR AND TRIM

A lot of the trimmings will be familiar to those who know the Jaguar Mk2, as much of the trim and the complete basic layout was retained for the Daimler. The primary difference is the shaping of the front seats, which are squarer and trimmed so as to form a bench if both driver »

"Priced at £1,786, it was even, initially, more than the powerful 3.8 litre manual"

DAIMLER V8 TIMELINE

1962	1967	1967	1969
2.5V8 arrives as a belated replacement for the Conquest, broadly a Jaguar Mk2 fitted with Turner-designed 2.5 litre V8 and Borg-Warner automatic gearbox.	Manual transmission becomes an option - £60 cheaper than the automatic model.	Daimler 2.5V8 replaced by V8-250. Slimmer bumpers fitted, along with vinyl padded dash top and door cappings, heated rear window, reclining seats and negative earth electrics.	Daimler V8-250 replaced by Daimler Sovereign 2.8, based on the Jaguar XJ6 2.8 model.

and passenger are adjusted the same way. While the V8 is perhaps a shade small to be considered a six-seater, the column shift of the automatic nonetheless allows the possibility for short distances. The similarity means that all the issues you'd face with a Mk2 are present – check for lifting lacquer or veneer to the woodwork, as this will be expensive to replace – bank on just over £6,000 to replace all the wood in the cabin, though individual items, especially second-hand, will likely cost less to replace. Splits or tears in the leather can also be expensive to have repaired, though there's nothing in the cabin of a Daimler V8 that should be beyond the abilities of a reasonably decent local trimmer. You're looking at around £2,000 for a set of seat covers and maybe another £700 for replacement foams if you want to undergo a complete retrim, courtesy of Aldridge Trimming.

Unlike the later Jaguars, the Daimler V8-250 retained leather seat covers »

as standard, so if you're looking at a car with vinyl someone has skimped on the retrim costs. It did however have padded vinyl door cappings and dashboard top, which can split through UV damage but are easily replaced. Provision was made for a radio but these would have been fitted to the first owner's specification when new, and likely upgraded since. The standard steering wheel should be black plastic like the Jaguar, but if someone has fitted a wood-rimmed unit it won't devalue the car – it's a matter of personal taste and original wheels are available.

VERDICT

Far from being the poor relation, we think the Daimler V8 is actually a better buy than the Jaguar Mk2. The Jaguar clubs and the Daimler Lanchester Owners' Club will be full of people happy to help, it's better value and much more characterful. Pretty much everything you need is available, too, making it an easy classic to own. Jaguar specialists will cater for the car given its similarity to the Mk2 – and mechanically, anywhere that caters for the Daimler SP250 should be able to help too.

It's rarer and more interesting than a Mk2 and more fun to drive than a Rover P5B, while offering better value for money than the other well-known Mk2 alternative, the S-type. While each of these cars will please its prospective owners, the Daimler combines the V8 burble of the Rover, the value of the S-type and the traditional style of the Mk2 to make a car that have a more enduring appeal.

“We think the Daimler V8 is actually a better buy than the Jaguar Mk2”

The only compromise you might have to make, if a Mk2 had been on your shopping list, is automatic transmission – but given that the Daimler is more of a relaxed cruiser than the Jag it suits the ethos of the car.

VALUES

The Daimler V8 has always offered better value than the equivalent Jaguar. In 2012, the Daimler V8 in perfect order would have fetched the same £15,000 as a Jaguar 2.4 – and ten grand less than the 3.4 with which it should perhaps more fairly be compared. It’s now worth less than a 2.4, making is less likely as a future appreciating asset than the Mk2, but at £20,000 it’s gained a third in ten years. You won’t find a savings account that would achieve that, and the Daimler would be far more fun.

£8,000-12,000 will get you a nice and usable model, even if it’s not the best in the world. Spending below £6,000 means you’re likely to buy something that needs a lot of work, and given the cost of panels and trim items, long term it’s a far riskier strategy than simply buying a nice one in the first place. Remember that a pair of front wings and a retrim will easily make the difference between project money and concours money, and that’s before you look at the rest of the car. ■

SPECIFICATION

1965 **DAIMLER 2.5 V8**

ENGINE: 2548cc/V8

BHP: 140bhp

TORQUE: 155lb ft

0-60: 13.8sec

MAX SPEED: 113mph

ECONOMY: 18mpg

BUYING JAGUAR S-TYPE

Derived from the Mk2 but featuring numerous updates, Jaguar's newest compact saloon was a technological advance, and still makes an excellent buy all these years later. But if you're tempted by an S-type, what needs checking before you take the plunge?

WORDS: **PAUL GUINNESS** PICS: **KELSEY ARCHIVE**

Coming to market four years after the Mk2 and bearing more than a passing resemblance to its stablemate was the S-type, Jaguar's latest compact saloon. It was an interesting move, given that the Mk2 was still a popular choice. Jaguar knew, however, that a slightly more upmarket and technically more advanced derivative could be a strong seller, hence the arrival of the S-type – complete with independent rear suspension for improved handling.

Styling-wise the S-type was a fascinating combination of a Mk2-like front end grafted on to the rear of what looked like a slightly shrunken MkX. It meant a longer boot and a flatter rear roofline, as well as 'squared-off' rear wheel arches and thinner bumpers each end. The end result was pleasing, with the S-type boasting a more modern, lower stance than the Mk2 on which it was based. It was the ideal vehicle for anyone who craved the advanced suspension design of

the MkX within a Mk2-sized package, and offered a larger boot too.

So impressive was the handling of the S-type (and so cheap was it to buy in the 1970s), it eventually became the default getaway car for just about every ne'er-do-well in popular culture. Watch an old episode of *The Sweeney* and you'll usually find villains escaping in a down-at-heel S-type.

Values have been rising in recent years as the S-type has become more appreciated, although there's still something of a gap (albeit no longer a ravine) between it and the Mk2 – making the S-type arguably the cannier buy right now.

WHICH MODEL IS BEST?

The S-type was announced in September 1963, although production wasn't ramped up until a few months later – which explains why a mere 43 cars were built during that inaugural year. A total of 7,032 S-types rolled off the line in 1964, but the following year was the model's best ever, with 9,741 sold worldwide. By the time the very last S-type was produced in 1968, a total of 24,993 cars had found buyers – a respectable but not outstanding result. Indeed, throughout most of its five-year run, the S-type was outsold by the Mk2, despite the latter being the older and less technologically advanced design.

The car's relatively modest success means your final choice of S-type may depend as much on which model is available within budget as on any personal preferences. With just two engine options (Jaguar's familiar 3.4- and 3.8-litre straight-six), the list of S-type models isn't extensive – although, as you'll read shortly, there were some minor specification changes carried out during the S-type's career. Interestingly, the 3.8-litre version outsold the 3.4 three-to-two, partly due to the fact that the smaller engine was never offered in the crucial American market.

Another S-type development worthy of mention is the short-lived Jaguar 420 (and its Daimler Sovereign derivative), which arrived in late 1966. This latest compact Jaguar was developed from the S-type but featured a flat front end, squarer grille and quad headlamps, while under the bonnet was 4.2-litre power. It was an interesting variation on the S-type theme but one that we'll take a closer look at another time.

WHAT SPEC?

In an ideal world, the S-type of choice is inevitably the 3.8-litre version; this was the model that arrived first, featuring a twin-carb (HD-8 SUs) version of the familiar XK straight-six. It was notable for featuring Jaguar's latest independent rear suspension set-up, a design that had first seen the light of day in the E-Type and MkX models of 1961. Just two years later, a scaled-down version of the same suspension was being employed in the new S-type.

The 3.4-litre S-type arrived a few months after the 3.8, identical in all but its engine capacity. The difference in power wasn't huge, with the 3.8's 220bhp being just 10bhp more than that of the new 3.4-litre model; but keen drivers inevitably preferred the extra torque of the 3.8, with 240lb/ft. (at 3,000rpm) on offer compared with 'just' 216lb/ft. from the smaller-engined S-type.

There was a gap between the two when it came to performance, with the 3.8 offering a top speed well in excess of 120mph and the 0-60mph sprint taking around 10 seconds in manual/overdrive spec; by comparison the 3.4 knocked around 5mph off the top end, and added a good couple of seconds on to that 0-60 time. Your choice of manual or automatic transmission will come down to personal preference, though there's inevitably a penalty to be paid in terms of standing-start acceleration with the auto.

Each S-type offered slightly poorer performance than the equivalent »

Jaguar Mk2, blamed on the former's independent rear suspension adding the best part of 350lb to its kerb weight. The upside was a smoother, more sophisticated ride quality than the Mk2's, even if the S-type did lose some of its sporting feel. Useful upgrades carried out to the S-type (and worth bearing in mind when buying) include the adoption of a bigger brake servo in October 1964, which means less effort when braking.

KEY CHECKS

BODYWORK

As with the Mk2 on which it is based, the S-type's monocoque bodyshell is no stranger to rot; and with so many vulnerable areas hidden from general view, it's essential that prospective buyers are vigilant when carrying out their inspections. If buying from a dealer, ask if the car can be viewed on a ramp, as this is the most effective way of ascertaining its overall condition.

At the front end, the two longitudinal chassis legs that meet the crossmember are vulnerable, as is the crossmember itself – particularly where the joints meet the front wings. Rust here means that water is allowed into the 'chassis' leg, which leads to further problems; and on many cars you'll also find rust issues (or signs of previous repairs) around the front jacking point that's situated below the A-pillar, with signs of bodging not unusual on less-than-perfect survivors.

A neglected S-type will also be prone to rot in its floorpans, along the entire length of each inner and outer sill (but particularly towards the rear), around its rear anti-roll bar mountings, and in its spare wheel well; you should also check the twin fuel tanks for signs of repairs, rust or leaks. Outer panels are similarly affected by rot, particularly the front wings (around the grille and headlamp surrounds, as well as where the rear of the wing joins the sill), the bottom of each door, the rear wheelarch, the lower rear quarter panel and even the lower edge of the boot lid.

Replacement panels and repair sections are available, but you need to budget carefully if you're taking on a car that requires work. A wing repair section comprising the entire complex front end of the panel, for example, will set you back almost £1,700, while a section for the back of the front wing costs around £193 from Martin Robey. Complete outer, centre and inner sills are priced at around £138, £116 and £53 respectively, while front and rear door skins are listed at just over £55 each.

ENGINE AND TRANSMISSION

Both 3.4- and 3.8-litre versions of the XK straight-six are robust and reliable, but obviously rely on the right level of maintenance in order to remain healthy. Does the car you're buying come with plenty of paperwork to prove it's been well looked after? It's important to check for excessive smoke from the exhaust, although sometimes this can be a sign of blockages in the breather system's filter and pipework.

Engine oil leaks are common, and often stem from the crankshaft's rear oil seal and the cam covers; check beneath the car if it's been stood, and look carefully around the engine for signs of leaks. If the engine rattles unduly at start-up, it usually means the timing chain is worn and needs replacing (a labour-intensive job). It's also not unusual for the XK engine's tappets to close up with use, which will mean professional re-shimming and more potential expense. It's important to check the oil pressure of any S-type (40psi when warm is ideal), and vital that you check for signs of overheating, usually caused by furred-up waterways.

The Moss four-speed manual-overdrive gearbox fitted to the earliest S-types isn't the slickest but it is reliable, the main issues being worn synchromesh on high-milers and a lack of parts to rebuild them. October 1964 saw Jaguar replacing this with its own all-synchromesh new design; not only was it a smoother-shifting unit, it came with revised gear ratios for a slight improvement in acceleration. When test-driving any manual-transmission S-type, check for signs of clutch slip, as fitting a new clutch is an engine-out job. Overdrive is not fitted to all manuals, so bear that in mind.

SUSPENSION, STEERING AND BRAKES

The biggest difference between the S-type and the Mk2 is its rear suspension design, thanks to the adoption of an independent set-up derived from that of the wider-tracked MkX. The double-wishbone design carried the braking, suspension and damping units in a single cross-bridge, isolated from the bodyshell by rubber blocks. It was clever and sophisticated, yet remains usefully reliable on well-maintained cars – although you'll need to carry out the usual checks for worn dampers and bushes, sagging springs and so on. The front suspension is essentially the same coil-sprung, double-wishbone, subframe-mounted design as the Mk2's, and is similarly robust when maintained properly.

Power-steering was a popular option on the S-type, and is desirable now (with many restored cars having been retro-fitted with it). Early S-types with power-assistance used a Burman recirculating-ball system, later usurped by a higher ratio set-up that gives a much better feel.

The S-type used the same Dunlop-designed all-disc braking system as the Mk2, and should reveal few nasty surprises here. A thorough test drive will reveal whether or not the servo is defective (a new one is £480 from David Manners), and you should obviously carry out the usual checks for corroded brake lines/pipes, scored discs and so on.

INTERIOR, ELECTRICS AND TRIM

The interior of the S-type was noticeably different from that of the Mk2 thanks to its more upmarket intentions. The walnut-veneered dashboard resembled a smaller version of the MkX's (complete with pull-out veneered drinks tray), while the wider front seats gave almost the impression of a 'bench' effect. The rear seat was also redesigned, creating more room for passengers in the back. The whole impression was one of reassuring opulence. »

> "The rear seat was also redesigned, creating more room for passengers in the back"

The downside all these years later is that an S-type needing work inside is going to be an expensive proposition. Fully refurbishing that impressive looking dashboard, for example, can quickly run into the thousands for re-veneering, re-lacquering, reconditioned instruments and so on. And the same goes for the leather upholstery, which can be expensive to replace; SC Parts can supply new part-leather covers for the front seats at just over £1,300 per pair, but you then need to add on the price of new padding (if required) as well as labour costs.

MAINTAINING & MODIFYING

If you buy an S-type that requires little (or nothing) in the way of restoration work, and you're the kind of owner with a hands-on approach, then keeping it well-maintained should easily be within your capabilities. The S-type's specification is relatively straightforward and, when maintained properly, the car should provide reliable and dependable motoring. The other good news is that, if you're planning on carrying out your own servicing, you'll find most parts very affordable. David Manners, for example, will sell you an oil filter for just over £4, an air filter element for around £8, a set of plugs for less than £18 and a plug lead set for roughly £57.

If you're not a fan of getting your hands dirty, there's no shortage of Mk2 specialists willing to take on the servicing and maintenance of your car. Experts like Ken Jenkins will carry out just about any repairs, providing you with an honest appraisal of your Jaguar and any remedial work required.

There are lots of options when it comes to modifying your S-type, a process that starts with relatively minor upgrades like a C42 alternator conversion kit (via SC Parts, priced from around £587) and a high-performance starter motor (at £234 from the same source). If you fancy swapping your S-type's standard exhaust, you'll find a complete stainless steel Falcon system available from David Manners for a competitive £720.

If you want to go further, you can upgrade your S-type's front brakes to a four-pot caliper set-up (priced from around £660 for a conversion kit from SC Parts), while uprated Gaz shock absorbers (at around £91 and £122 each front/rear respectively) will help to improve the S-type's already impressive handling.

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PAYING FOR AN S-TYPE

The S-type has traditionally lagged behind its Mk2 cousin when it comes to asking prices, although the days are long gone when roadworthy cars could be picked up for a couple of thousand pounds. There are still keenly-priced restoration projects out there, of course, but these tend to start in price at around £3-4,000 for a car requiring major work. At the time of writing, we know of one American import that's for sale with an asking price of £5,995; it's refreshingly rust-free but inevitably needs paintwork, an interior refurb and full mechanical recommissioning before it hits the road in the UK.

At the other extreme are those S-types with asking prices of £30-35,000, at which level you can expect a car presented to an extremely high standard and mechanically perfect. For those with £15-20,000 to spend, meanwhile, there are S-types available that are solid, presentable, free of major faults and ready to enjoy; they might not be immaculate survivors, but they currently offer excellent value compared with other compact Jaguar saloons of the 1960s. Many vendors will ask a higher price for a 3.8-litre model, though in reality no healthy S-type will disappoint performance-wise. ■

CONTACTS

Parts

David Manners – www.jagspares.co.uk

Ken Jenkins – www.ukjag.co.uk

SNG Barratt – www.sngbarratt.com

SC Parts – www.scparts.co.uk

Martin Robey – www.martinrobey.com

Clubs

Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club – www.jec.org.uk

Jaguar Drivers' Club –
www.jaguardriver.co.uk

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BUYING GUIDE

JAGUAR X-TYPE DIESEL

All you need to know to buy the best-value entry level Jag

WORDS: **SAM SKELTON** PHOTOGRAPHY: **PAUL WALTON**

Many people dismiss the X-TYPE as a Mondeo in a party frock. But we take issue with this, for a number of reasons. First, 355,000 sales is no mean feat for a Jaguar, nor for a car in the fiercely-competitive small executive class. Second, if you're going to use an existing platform there's nothing wrong with the Mk3 Mondeo in the first place. Third, underneath the Audi TT sits a Skoda Yeti platform, and you don't hear people complaining about that.

What makes the X-TYPE worse in the eyes of its detractors is the fact that it's a diesel Jaguar, a front wheel drive Jaguar, a manual Jaguar. Yes, it is. But these things have opened up Jaguar ownership to several thousand who might not have been able to justify a shiny XJ – and they still do. North of 40mpg, comfortable space for four and their luggage, and prices beginning well under £1,000 mean that we should be paying attention to the X-TYPE diesel, and just how much car it offers for the money.

Jaguar launched the X-TYPE in 2001, into a market sector it had left

in the late 1960s. Initially available as a 2.5 or 3.0 V6 with all wheel drive, the range would expand over the following years to include a 2.0 V6 and the engines which interest us for this buying guide – the 2.0 diesel launched in 2003 and the 2.2 diesel launched in 2005. 2004 saw the launch of an estate for the first time in Jaguar's history, based on the X-TYPE saloon and which would continue to the end of production alongside the four door model. A facelift in 2007 saw a range rationalisation whereby most models were only available in diesel format, save for range topping V6 estates. This facelift also brought the option of an automatic transmission to the 2.2 litre diesel, which in pre facelift form had been manual only. The last X-TYPEs would finally be built in 2009.

ENGINE

The four cylinder diesel engines are of a shared family – both are also used in variants of the Ford Mondeo while the 2.0 shares its heritage with the Ford Transit. But remember, many premium cars have shared van engines, just look at the Porsche 924 for another example. It's been known for them to run cold, which is an issue that can be traced to the oil cooler thermostat in the water pump housing. It's half an hour to solve, and a part that costs about £20 depending upon the supplier. There is also a conventional thermostat located near the header tank, but these usually don't fail.

Renewing the fuel filter can be difficult, as these engines don't have an intake pump and thus the fuel filter needs to be pre-filled or bled with a hand pump to prevent air locks in the system. Continuous cranking with an air lock can cause the pump to run dry, score the cam ring and cause internal pump failure.

Boost pipes can crack and perish, and both diesel engines are turbocharged. Check for black smoke from the exhaust. Injectors can also fail – bank on a grand to replace all 4, and it's one of those jobs where you really are better doing them all at once than chasing a fault round the engine bay. Some faults can look like failed injectors, masking the real issue. Matt Norbury of North Wales Jag Centre suggests that poor hot starting and idle could be an ECU issue, and that a software flash at around a hundred quid can save the expense of a set of injectors.

Both 2.0 and 2.2 require a 5w30 oil that meets Ford standard WSS-M2C-913-B or higher, while 2.2 autos with a DPF need a low SAPS C3 variant.

It's worth plugging the car in to a good OBDII reader if you can. Fault codes can be raised if a boost pipe comes off the turbo at the back of the engine bay, or if a sensor comes loose, both of which are easy fixes. If the glow plug light remains on, It can indicate one of a number of faults ranging from a dirty fuel filter to a

split EGR hose, a fuel pump issue or a turbo actuator problem. Early cars used a vacuum operated turbo and EGR setup, from 05 this changed to an electronic system and 2.2d autos are different again. A gearbox warning on the dash or loss of power can be traced to the EGR valve on 2.2 autos. Second-hand EGR valves aren't worth it, as there is no way to test them.

TRANSMISSION

Manual and automatic gearboxes were fitted – 2.0 models have a five speed gearbox, 2.2s have a six speed regardless of whether auto or manual. Automatic gearboxes can be prone to internal failure, but used examples are available for between £400 and £700 from most of the specialist breakers.

Manual transmission cars have a heavy dual mass flywheel, which is known to fail. Budget £400 or so in parts if this happens, plus labour – and bank on around a grand to have the job done by a specialist including parts and a new clutch. It's not a job we'd recommend doing at home – undertray bolts can shear, driveshafts can also jam in the hubs.

SUSPENSION, STEERING AND BRAKES

The X-TYPE's suspension is a fairly standard Macpherson strut arrangement at the front, with a lower arm and anti roll bar. The back has separate coil springs and dampers, a lower spring pan arm, lower control arm, upper wishbones and trailing arms. It rides and handles well as a result, if cared for. Four wheel alignment, good tyres and balanced wheels are vital.

Coil springs can rust and crack, particularly at the bottom where water traps in the spring pan in the lower arm. Bottom damper mounts can wear and rattle, as can worn mounting bushes for the lower control arms. These can also cause excessive and uneven tyre wear. Worn ARB drop links can have a similar effect at the front, causing knocking or rattling. Likewise, mounting bushes can wear.

Wheel bearings can rumble long before the MoT man spots them, so keep an ear open. Matt Norbury at North Wales Jag Centre advises that worn bearings are not a DIY job. "I would not recommend this as a DIY job, because 90% of the time we suffer issues with the rear Torx mounting bolts rounding the heads off, or seizing after a few rotations beyond the capacity of a 1,000 ft lb impact gun, and on occasions snapping. Should this happen on your driveway, you're in a pickle!"

There are single piston calipers on all four corners, with vented front and solid rear disc brakes. Caliper slider bolts car seize, if not regularly stripped and lubricated. Brake pipes were originally steel – they can rust, but replacements can be made up fairly easily. Brake discs can stick onto the hub, and require a lump hammer to remove. If the brakes come apart nicely it's a sign of a car that's had plenty of careful maintenance. It's also worth remembering that on cars with alloy wheels, you should smear a little copper grease on the mating surface before fitting the wheels to the hubs to avoid galvanic corrosion. Otherwise, they can become stuck to the hubs.

Wheels vary from 16" to 18", and the larger wheels are prone to kerbing and pothole damage. 17 and 18" varieties can also become porous, while 18" wheels can crack around the rim. Wheels are available from many breakers, from eBay and even on Facebook Marketplace if you look. Most X-TYPEs come with space saver spare wheels, but there's room to fit a full size if you don't mind sacrificing a little boot space.

BODY

X-TYPEs came with a choice of two bodies – a four door saloon, or from 2004 a five door estate. Both were available in a range of colours – to find the colour of your car, check the inside of the nearside B post. The biggest issue you're likely to face with an X-TYPE is corrosion of the outer sills. They're covered with plastic trim panels, the removal of which is likely to mean you need a new set of plastic fixings – around £40. If you're friendly with your local MoT tester, you can get a rough idea

of their condition with a small mirror and a light while the car is on a ramp. Sill repair panels can be bought via eBay for around £65 per side.

Plastic headlamp adjusters can break, resulting in loose lamps that wobble over uneven surfaces. Auto Reserve Jaguar sell repair kits for £23.60, though were out of stock at the time this was written. Lenses can go opaque, but there are plenty of products on the market intended to make cloudy lenses clear again. Bonnet mechanisms can stick, making it hard to close the bonnet – a regular treatment with light grease is a wise move. If the problem is caused by the cables it isn't the end of the world, as these can be replaced.

The waist rail trims next to the door glass can corrode – if the paint is bubbly, the best solution is to replace it. Used replacements can cost from as little as a tenner.

INTERIOR

Even the most basic X-TYPEs have plus velour trim, while Alcantara and leather are available further up the range. Toys can include electric windows, cruise control, climate control, heated, electric, memory seats, a touch screen satnav, Jaguar Voice and a CD changer. It's easy to source replacement interiors from breakers, though you'll need to find one with the same toys as your car in order for it to work.

Door latches can fail, meaning the car refuses to lock or unlock at times. However, they're cheap and easy to get hold of from breakers such as Eurojag. They can be fiddly to replace, though. Climate control aspirator motors can become noisy – and can buzz after the engine has been switched off. Back in October 2015 we featured a guide to renewing the motor. It would be nice to have at least 2 keys, but many cars these days will only come with one. The buttons can wear, but it's possible to buy replacement cases to keep them looking good.

RUNNING COSTS

The 2.0 models are all in VED band F (£200 per year), except for those made prior to May 2005 which are in band G (£240 per year).

2.2 manuals are also in band G, but 2.2 autos are in band I (£320 per year). In addition, all models should be able to achieve 50mpg on a run. Servicing is recommended every year or 12,500 miles, and you don't need a specialist to look after one given the mainstream element of the drivetrain.

Many of the specialists and breakers who advertise in *Jaguar World* can supply the parts you'll need to keep your car going. Front discs can be had for £60 per pair, while pads can cost as little as £15. Given the value of these cars these days, we would advise that you stick to independents

RECALLS

The X-TYPE range has been recalled six times in total, between 2003 and 2010. Some of these were minor, and some major. We have appended a list below, and recommend you that you check all recall work has been carried out on any car you inspect. By phoning a Jaguar dealer and quoting the registration, it should be possible to ascertain if any recall work is outstanding.

March 2003
Indicator telltale may show no errors if a bulb has failed. Affects 2001-2003 cars.

July 2005
Battery positive cable may chafe on injector nut, and cause short circuit. Affects 2003-2005 cars.

October 2004
DSC Yaw sensor may delaminate, causing unexpected braking. Affects 2004 cars.

October 2004
Speed restriction label may come off the space saver spare wheel. Affects 2004 cars.

December 2004
Handbrake may come loose on manual examples, recall to modify lever. Affects 2004 cars.

September 2011
Cruise control may remain engaged, or may not engage. Affects 2005-2010 cars.

> "With 50mpg easily achievable and the same level of comfort as any other Jag"

and specialists – main dealers will be able to help with some parts but they will be significantly more expensive.

VERDICT

The X-TYPE diesel offers far better value for money than any other Jaguar, if saving cash is at the top of your priority list. With 50mpg easily achievable and the same level of comfort as any other Jag, it's a compelling choice with inexpensive servicing, maintenance and plenty of parts available second-hand if needed. And better still, there's an estate if you need the carrying capacity. Despite all the parsimony, it looks the part in any car park when cleaned up, and should even show nicely if you want to take it to somewhere like the Jaguar Breakfast Club. For those with classic Jaguars in regular use, it even makes for a great winter daily driver too.

Should you buy one? Of course you should. And the best bit is that they're cheap enough that even the nicest shouldn't cost a fortune to source. If you want Jaguar motoring on a budget, this is the car for you. ■

SPECIFICATION

2004 **X-TYPE 2.0D**

ENGINE: 1998cc 4-cyl
POWER: 128bhp
TORQUE: 244lb ft
0-60MPH: 9.5secs
TOP SPEED: 125mph
ECONOMY: 50mpg
TRANSMISSION: 5-spd man / 5-spd auto

SPECIFICATION

2008 **X-TYPE 2.2D**

ENGINE: 2198cc 4-cyl
POWER: 152bhp
TORQUE: 270lb ft
0-60MPH: 8.5secs
TOP SPEED: 137mph
ECONOMY: 47mpg
TRANSMISSION: 6-spd man / 6-spd auto

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1952 ASTON MARTIN DB2 LE MANS LIGHTWEIGHT

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1966 JAGUAR E TYPE 4.2 FHC

Built to fast road spec by Tom Lenthall. Fitted with power steering and air conditioning, just serviced and ready to be enjoyed **£115,000**

1965 JAGUAR E TYPE 4.2 FHC

Built to fast road Spec by Southern Classics, very quick indeed and includes a Mohair Webasto roof and a Mega sound system, **£120,000**

1964 JAGUAR E TYPE 3.8 ROADSTER

Completely restored to a very high standard and just out from a service and refresh. Perfect throughout and not expensive at **£99,500**

1960 JAGUAR XK 150 FIXED HEAD COUPE

Finished in Old English White with Burgundy hide interior. Fabulous older restoration by qualified engineer. The best you will find. **£79,950**

2006 ASTON MARTIN DB9

In Solent Silver blue with Cream hide interior and a dark blue Mohair soft top. Complete and detailed service history and in lovely condition. **£29,950**

2008 ASTON MARTIN DB9

In Onyx Black with Cream hide interior. Full main dealer and specialist service history, 5 spoke alloys and red calipers, a fabulous driving example at **£32,950**

2001 AC 289 COBRA RECREATION

By Hawk Cars. Beautifully built and in unmarked condition throughout. Silver with a sumptuous red hide interior, Rover 3.9 as used in a Morgan plus 8. **£47,750**

1974 JAGUAR E TYPE 5.3 V12 SERIES III

This is a really nice example, maintained by Southern Classics and fitted with power steering and automatic transmission. Lovely to drive, **£72,500**

1970 TRIUMPH TR6 IN OLD ENGLISH WHITE

The subject of a full, body-off restoration with photographic evidence. Black mohair hood, overdrive, and Minilite style alloy wheels. **£19,950**

1997 ASTON MARTIN DB7I6 VOLANTE

In Solway Grey with black hide interior. 51,000 miles only, manual 5 speed transmission, very well cared for and always garaged **£24,950**

2003 ASTON MARTIN DB7 VANTAGE VOLANTE

In Aston Racing Green with cream hide interior. 33,000 miles only and sadly only for sale due to bereavement, It's a beautiful example at **£24,950**

2003 ASTON MARTIN DB7 VANTAGE VOLANTE

In Onyx Black with Cream hide interior.36,000 miles only, sold by us 12 years ago to the last owner, Full-service history **£24,950**

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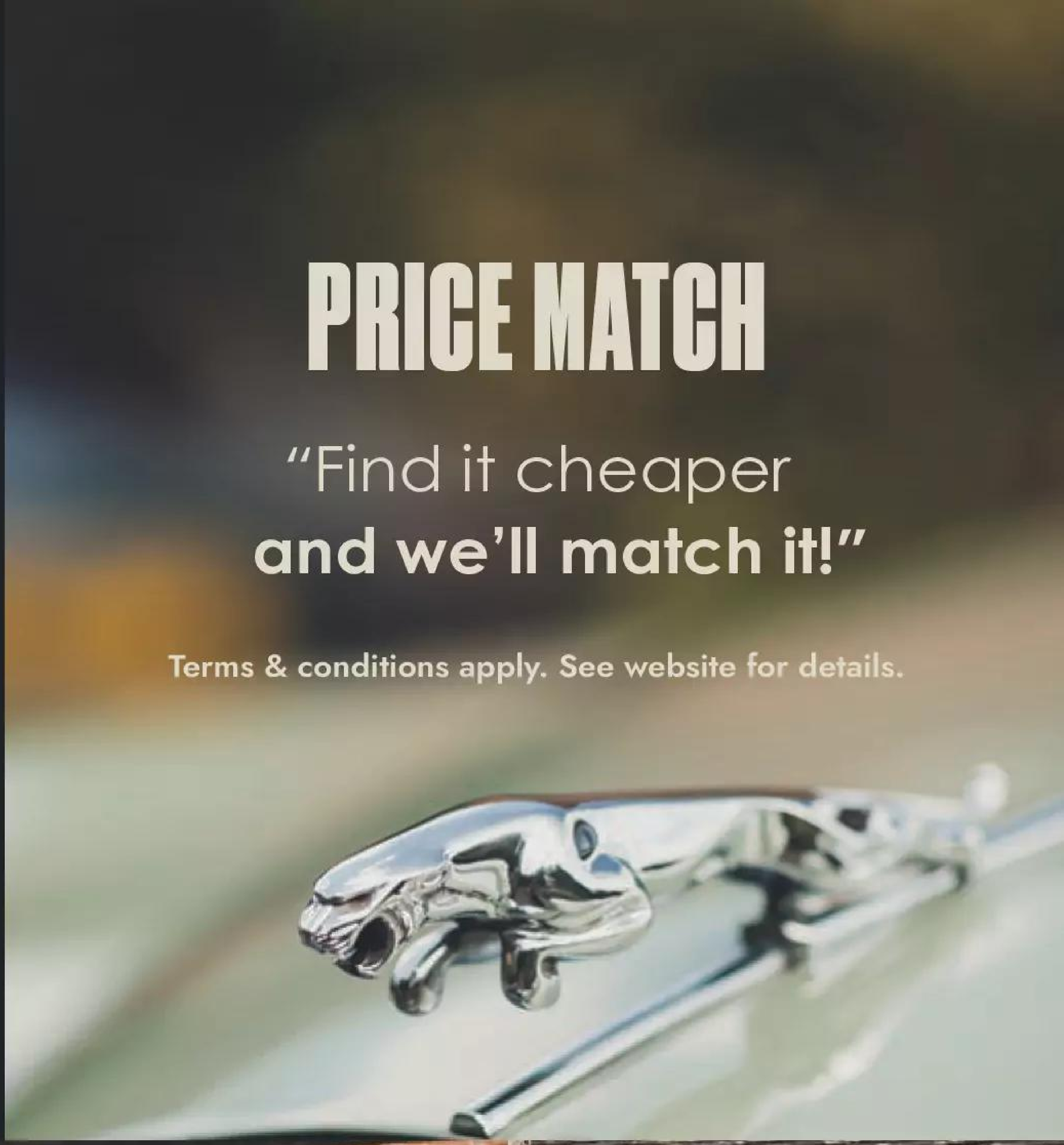

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